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THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS

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FIRST THREE GOSPELS

THEIR ORIGIN AND RELATIONS

BY

J. ESTLIN CARPENTER, M.A.

THIRD EDITION

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1904

TRUTH ALWAYS AND EVERYWHERE IS A SACRED TRUST FROM GOD FOR THE SERVICE OF MAN.

From a Sermon preached by the late Rev. Aubrey L. Moore, M.A., at St. Mary's Oxford, November 24th, 1889.

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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

Since the First Edition of this book was published in 1890, the First Three Gospels have been the subject of eager study, both in this country, and in the great schools of the continent of Europe and the United States. English students will find the results of these manifold labours duly registered (from different points of view) in the two great collections of Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, and *Encyclopædia Biblica*. In the absence, however, of any more recent popular exposition, this book is re-issued, with some modifications, in the hope that it may still supply to some of those who approach the New Testament without technical aid, the outlines of a method of literary and historical enquiry into the sources of the life of Jesus.[1]

The value of the Gospels as witnesses to the career of 'the prophet of Nazareth' having been recently challenged from opposite sides by the exponents of secularism and theosophy, an attempt has been made, in a concluding chapter, to sketch the general results to which the previous treatment appears to lead. Those whose duty as teachers has required them to convey to others the impression of the most significant figure in human history, will be most ready to acknowledge the difficulty of the task, and to forgive the hand that fails.

Oxford, September 7th, 1904. J. E. C.

[1] The reader who may desire some acquaintance with the origin and progress of these studies, is referred to the author's lectures on *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century* (1903), Lectures v.—vii.

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INTRODUCTION.

Our New Testament opens with four lives of Jesus which we call Gospels. This name is now used in a different sense from that in which it was first applied. In the opening of his ministry, Jesus is said to have preached 'the gospel of God,' *Mark* i. 14. When the apostle Paul speaks of 'the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ,' *Rom.* ii. 16, he means the sum of Christian teaching which it was his business to carry through the world. Not till more than a hundred years after Jesus had passed away, was the term employed to describe a certain kind of book. We speak of the Four Evangelists, but in the early Church this was the title of a regular class of teachers who devoted themselves to spreading the 'good news,' *Ephes.* iv. 11. The Gospel could be called 'God's gospel,' (*Mark* i. 14, *Rom.* i. 1, etc.), inasmuch as it was believed to issue from him, and contain the great providential secret of his purpose for the world. It could be called 'the gospel of his Son,' *Rom.* i. 9, or 'Christ's gospel,' 2 *Cor.* ix. 13, as being first declared by Jesus and embodied in his teaching, and then concerned with the whole nature of his work among men. And it could be called

'the gospel of the kingdom,' *Matt.* iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14, inasmuch as it was at first comprised in the announcement 'The kingdom of God is at hand,' *Mark* i. 15. Not till the preaching had been recorded, did the word begin to acquire the significance which it now possesses when we designate the first four books of our New Testament as the Four Gospels, cp. *Mark* i. 1.

A trace of this change is preserved in the titles which are often erroneously quoted as the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, etc. The more correct form is 'the Gospel according to Matthew.' When the collection of our New Testament writings was begun in the latter half of the second century, the first four books were grouped together as 'the Gospel.' Of this Gospel the separate narratives formed so many distinct representations. They are themselves anonymous, and the four names traditionally connected with them do not meet us till long after their original composition, in the writings of great Church teachers, like Irenæus of Lyons (in France), Clement, the learned theologian of Alexandria, and Tertullian of Carthage in North Africa, between the years 180 and 220 A.D. In the preceding generation Justin, who had been born at Neapolis, the ancient Shechem, in Samaria, quotes largely (150-160 A.D.) from 'the Memoirs of the Apostles,' which seem to have included our First Three, but he never mentions any of the gospels by the names known to us. He was probably acquainted with the Fourth Gospel, but he does not cite it; and he refers to some incidents which our books do not contain. These must have been derived either from other narratives, or from current traditions.

Both of these sources were no doubt still to some

extent open. The preface to the Third Gospel asserts that when it was written there were already many narratives in existence 'concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us.' These were not, however, the composition of the actual companions of Jesus; they depended on the testimony of those who 'from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.' The scope and contents of these documents are as unknown to us as their number. Did they relate the whole, or only a portion, of the career of the Teacher? Did they commence with the Baptism, like *Mark*, or did they, with *Matthew* and *Luke*, start from his birth? And what became of them? The story alike of their rise and their disappearance is beyond our reach. In the second century traces exist, usually among heretical schools, of various books named after Peter, Bartholomew, Thomas, Judas, Matthias, the Twelve, the Egyptians. One book, designated the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews,' was known as late as the fourth century, and was believed to be closely related to our *Matthew*, though the small portions of it which have been preserved do not bear out that view. It is possible that Justin may have employed this book, or may have gathered some of its contents by report. What we may call the canon of the Gospels was then growing in importance, though not positively defined, as the 'Memoirs of the Apostles' were read aloud in the congregations at their meetings for worship on the first day of the week.

Among the earlier contemporaries of Justin was Papias, of Hierapolis in Phrygia, who wrote five books of 'Expositions of the Sayings (or Oracles) of the Lord' about 140-150 A.D. How much of this was interpretation

or commentary, how much actual translation, we do not know. Nor do the slender extracts which remain enable us to determine on what records it was founded. The interesting circumstance is that while Papias is actually the first to mention the names of Matthew and Mark in connexion with written documents,[1] he himself preferred to rely on 'the words of the elders' gathered from their disciples:—

'On any occasion when a person came [in my way] who had been a follower of the Elders, I would enquire about the discourses of those Elders, what was said by Andrew, or by Peter, or by Philip, or by Thomas, or James, or by John or Matthew, or any other of the Lord's disciples, and what Aristion and the Elder John, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I did not think that I could get so much profit from the contents of books as from the utterings of a living and abiding voice.'[2]

Behind Papias, then, stretched a chain of tradition going back to those who, in the language of *Luke* i. 2, had been eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, and this tradition seemed to Papias to bring him into more direct relation to Jesus than any book. But books had no doubt been already long in use in the communities of believers. Out of these books our Four Gospels finally rose to pre-eminence, as the witness of the faith at the end of the second century. After the great struggle with the various forms of heresy known to us under the name of Gnosticism, a fourth term was added to the confession demanded of the candidate for baptism. He professed his belief in God the Father, in Jesus Christ his only begotten Son, in the Holy Spirit, and lastly in the Holy

[1] See chapters V. and VII.

[2] A number of unwritten sayings ascribed to Jesus are still found in early Christian writers, cp. chap. I. § 2 (4) *a*.

Catholic Church. Why not in the Scriptures? Because the teaching body, represented by the bishops of the churches which traced their history back to apostolic founders, was regarded as the real source of authority. It was under their influence, as the possessors of the deposit of the faith, that the Four Gospels became the basis of a New Testament which could be set beside the Old, and the ground of selection was largely the usage of the Church.

Too much stress, therefore, must not be laid upon the traditional titles. All kinds of works were in circulation under famous names. Tertullian gravely argued that the book of Enoch, which is now known to be a compilation of various elements belonging to the two centuries before Christ, was the actual production of the patriarch, and had been preserved by Noah in the ark. In the early generations of an obscure religious movement, among groups of believers who cared more for the spirit than the letter, the questions with which modern enquiry starts were hardly ever raised. Among the Bábís of Persia, for instance, whose founder suffered death in 1850, Prof. E. G. Browne tells us that he was especially impressed with 'the generally prevailing uncertainty as to the authorship of many of their own religious books, especially those of the earlier period,' a result which (he admits) was quite contrary to his preconceptions. The Gospels, Prof. Sanday has said, 'grew up in the dark.' Their history, therefore, was not noted at the time; and it has to be inferred partly from the scanty and sometimes contradictory statements of later generations, and partly from comparison among themselves. The testimony of Church-writers in the second century to the First Three Gospels will be cited hereafter.

A word must be said here to justify the selection of these three books for separate examination side by side in contrast with the Fourth.

A very brief examination suffices to show that *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke* are all constructed on a common plan. The account of the ministry of Jesus is preceded in each Gospel by a narrative of his Baptism and Temptation. His public career opens in Galilee. Its centre is in Capernaum; and Jesus teaches on the lake shore, upon the hills, in the village synagogues. He passes to and fro on missionary journeys; he chooses twelve of his disciples whom he sends out to proclaim that the kingdom is at hand in terms identical with his own declaration. There is the same opposition from synagogue-ruler, scribe, and Pharisee. There are the same parables, such as those of the Sower or the Mustard Seed; and the same incidents, such as the healing of the paralytic who was let down from the roof, or the cure of the demoniac of Gadara. Moreover, the crisis arrives at the same spot, when Jesus accepts the title of Messiah from Peter's lips at Caesarea Philippi, and announces that he will make the great venture and go to Jerusalem. The resolve is followed by the same heavenly attestation when the divine voice on the mount of Transfiguration is heard once more saying, 'Thou art my beloved son.' The march to the capital represents Jesus as travelling thither for the first time in his character of Teacher. All three Gospels describe his entry amid popular acclamations as Messiah. They relate the daring act by which he drives out the money-changers from the sanctuary, and concentrates on himself the hatred of the priestly guardians of the Temple. The same colloquies are re-

ported with the scribes and elders, the Pharisees and Herodians, the Sadducees. On the Mount of Olives Jesus utters the same warnings concerning the future. In the upper room he eats with them the same passover-supper Under the olives of Gethsemane he prays the same prayer, and triumphs over the same trial; before the High Priest he makes the same declaration of the speedy coming of the Son of Man; towards Pilate he maintains the same silence; on the cross the same darkness overshadows him, and as he dies the same temple-veil is rent in twain. From first to last, amid minor differences, the teaching and work of Jesus are presented from the same general point of view; and these Gospels, accordingly, are often described as the 'Synoptic' Gospels.[1]

Very different is the arrangement of the Fourth. It narrates no baptism, reports no temptation. From the neighbourhood of the Jordan Jesus passes to Cana of Galilee, and thence to Capernaum for a few days' stay. But a passover is already at hand, and Jesus goes up without delay to the capital, and opens his ministry in the metropolis with the cleansing of the Temple, which apparently excites no anger and leaves him unharmed. From this time onwards Jesus is occupied for two years in teaching chiefly in Judea, with only an occasional visit to Galilee. New places and persons are named in the story. The Messianic character of Jesus is assumed and recognised from the outset. The characteristic discussions about legal questions, such as violations of the Sabbath or purifications, disappear. There is no choice of the apostles, no preaching of the kingdom, no mission of the Twelve. The retreat to Caesarea Philippi, and

[1] Their authors are similarly designated 'the Synoptists.'

the momentous question 'Whom say ye that I am,' are ignored. On his Messianic entry into Jerusalem Jesus is acclaimed by a multitude which, shortly before, had witnessed the raising of Lazarus. The last supper is celebrated the day before the passover, so that Jesus suffers at the very hour at which the paschal lamb is slain. Of the discourse in which he prepares the disciples for his death the Synoptic narratives contain no trace. In the garden he needs no prayer to sustain his spirit, but before his majestic appearance the cohort sent to arrest him falls to the ground. He announces to Pilate that he had been born to bear witness to the truth, and he dies with the calm declaration 'it is finished.'

The comparison of the Fourth Gospel with the First Three thus at once reveals marked differences of structure and conception which demand separate and prolonged study. The general result of such study may be summed up in one word. The author presents us rather with an *interpretation* of the person and work of Jesus than with a record of his words and deeds. By this process the ideas of the Teacher are translated out of their Jewish forms and accommodated to new modes of thought, and the conceptions suggested by Christian experience are expressed in historical form, but are to be understood in the spirit rather than the letter. More than one example of this method of presentment may be found within the limits of the Bible itself. The picture of Moses as he pours out the majestic appeals of *Deuteronomy* on behalf of the sole Deity of Israel's God is widely different from the dim figure of the older story, and corresponds to the advanced religious consciousness of the prophets of the seventh century B.C. Two hundred years later another

hand again would delineate him as the creator of Levitical institutions which were not established in Israel until the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. Similarly in the *Chronicles* David is depicted as a kind of saint of Judaism; in the traditions embodied in the books of *Samuel* he stands out in his rugged might, hero and free-booter, builder of empire and master of intrigue, installing his own sons in the priesthood, and violating at every step the ritual precept and ceremonial ordinance of what was afterwards regarded as Mosaic law.

In such instances as these the past has been reconstructed in the light of later practice and belief, and the writers have worked designedly towards a particular end. The Fourth Evangelist, for instance, sought to combine two widely separate ideas, that of the Jewish Messiah and the Greek Word. In the Synoptic narratives, however, are there any traces of like processes? Are their stories, simple and artless as they so often seem, genuine deposits of trustworthy tradition? Do they really represent what actually happened? Or do they, too, betray the influence of the beliefs and hopes of their narrators? Can we account for what is not, on the face of it, historically credible, by what we know of the faith or expectation of the disciples who wrought into literary form the figure of Christ? This is the enquiry that now lies before us. The path is not easy, and the way is long. We must encounter many difficulties, and we may often have to lament that our results must after all remain uncertain. One thing only is clear; whoever would try to know and understand Jesus, must honestly make the attempt.

CHAPTER I.

THE FORMATION OF THE GOSPEL TRADITIONS.

How came our First Three Gospels to be written? Were they produced independently of each other, or did the later writers use the work of the earlier? In what order were they composed, and at what dates? Why do they sometimes agree so closely, as in the parable of the Sower, or the story of the paralytic let down through the roof; and why do they sometimes vary so widely about important sayings of the Teacher, or no less important incidents in his career? From what sources did the author of the earliest Gospel derive his knowledge about Jesus; and what other materials were at the command of the succeeding Evangelists?

It is easier to ask these questions than to answer them. They are only specimens of the kind of problems which beset all enquiry into the origin of the Synoptic narratives. But before we seek for some clearer light upon them, let us examine first of all the general conditions under which our Gospels came into existence. How did men know anything about Jesus before the lives of him were drawn up? They could only know what they were told by his

friends and followers. They depended, that is, on the witness of the Church. Of what did this testimony consist, and how was it formed into a body of definite teaching?

§ 1. The Preaching of the Early Church.

(1) Jesus committed nothing to writing. The words which he traced upon the Temple floor in presence of the guilty woman, while her accusers slunk away (*John* viii. 6, 8), vanished without a record. The founders of Christian sects have left behind them, like John Wesley, copious discourses to serve as standards of the faith.[1] Mohammed armed his followers with revelations which were afterwards collected into the book on which Islam rests, viz. the Korân. But Jesus, like Socrates, was content with 'speaking the word,' *Mark* ii. 2. After his first appearance in the synagogue at Capernaum, his amazed hearers cried out 'What is this? A new teaching!' *Mark* i. 27. And all through his public life, in the villages of Galilee, or the crowded temple-courts at Jerusalem, he moves among men as the 'Teacher.' Nor is there any trace that his disciples wrote anything during his life. There were, indeed, no scribes among them who might have been used to letters The most eminent apostles, the most intimate companions

[1] A curious difference has been observed in the case of two of the world's greatest teachers in another sphere. Dante showed no solicitude for his great *Commedia*. Most of Shakespeare's plays would have perished, in the absence of any pains on his part for their preservation, but for the unasked labour of Hemynge and Condel.

of Jesus, Peter, James, John, were fishermen. The best educated of them is supposed to have been Matthew, the tax-gatherer. Even after the Master had passed away, the Church at Jerusalem consisted mostly of the poor and unlearned. So was it at Corinth, 'not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble,' were among the called, *1 Cor.* i. 26. And what was true of the chief cities of Jewish piety and Greek culture, was no doubt true of many lesser centres of the new faith. The outward circumstances of the Church, therefore, were not at first favourable to literary composition.

(2) Moreover, the ministry of the apostles, like that of their Master, was a 'ministry of the word.' Follow them through the pages of the Book of Acts, and whether it is at Jerusalem or in Samaria, at Damascus or Antioch, they are busy preaching. They argue and discuss, they meet objections, they confute opponents, all with one aim, viz., to prove that Jesus is the Christ. And to what authority do they appeal? By what means do they vindicate their claim? Their justification lies in the Old Testament. In the temple-halls, before the tribunal of the Sanhedrin, at sabbath-worship in the synagogues, even among the friends of the centurion Cornelius, it is on law and prophet and psalmist that they rely. There were revealed already, so they believed, the facts of Messiah's life and death and resurrection. They had but to apply them to Jesus, and the evidence was complete. 'The written Gospel of the first period,' observes Dr. Westcott, 'was the Old Testament, interpreted by a vivid recollection of the Saviour's ministry.' The passages on which they relied, may not seem to us very conclusive. But to the first Christians they came with a new and

unexpected force. They often carried with them the venerable sanction of the synagogue, where they had been so understood for generations. Their adaptation to Jesus rested on analogies which we cannot accept; it was a work of pious imagination, which was indifferent to their original meaning, and seized on some feature of doubtful likeness with a fervour of conviction defying refutation. It was, indeed, the only method open to Jews in argument with Jews; and it continued efficacious for more than a hundred years. The principal work of Justin the Martyr, in the middle of the second century, is a dialogue with a Jew named Trypho, in which he seeks to prove from the Old Testament that Jesus was the Messiah whom the prophets had foretold.

(3) This line of reasoning, however, was only intelligible to those who accepted the apostolic statements about Jesus. To enforce it successfully it was necessary that the facts about him should be known. It must be shown that they conformed to the prophetic requirements. From this inevitable demand a body of teaching about Jesus took its rise. The story of his life was shaped under this idea, for this was the outward principle on which the Church was founded. To understand why he was to be acknowledged as Messiah was indispensable, in face of persecutions in the synagogue, or the scourge and imprisonment at the hands of a magistrate. But to the believer, this was not enough for the ordering of his daily conduct, or the satisfaction of the new love and hope aroused within him. In the community at Jerusalem, and in those that were founded from it, some kind of rule and organisation were required. When the great 'change of heart,' called 'repentance,' had taken place, and taken place sincerely,

there still remained fresh ideas to be worked out in practice, fresh habits to be formed, fresh affections to be regulated and maintained. What were the principles which should govern all behaviour? Plainly the principles of the 'kingdom' as laid down by the Teacher. So, more and more stress came to be laid on the knowledge of the 'laws of life' announced by Jesus. This knowledge could be drawn from one source only,—the followers to whom he had imparted it. The first attempts to throw it into a shape in which it could be communicated to others, must have proceeded from them. They would arise naturally in the Church at Jerusalem, to meet the simplest cases of daily need. They sprang out of the recollection of the Master's words; they consisted, therefore, in reminiscence, guided by faith, and prompted and shaped by the circumstances and conditions of the time. These memories, gathered out of the vanished year of their discipleship, they related to each other, and to the new converts. Like their public preaching, this private instruction was given by word of mouth. Here, then, were all the elements of a *tradition*.

§ 2. Transition to Writing.

(1) The length of time which would elapse before such traditions would be reduced to writing cannot possibly be determined. It must have depended on many circumstances which it is no longer in our power to trace. But it is plain that the conditions were not at first favourable to the conversion of an oral into a written gospel. Those who were actively engaged in preaching, would not pause to record their message. The ministry of the word was

much easier to the unlearned than that of the pen; and the pauses of travel and hardship, and the moments of safety from danger, seemed always to be occupied by some more immediate need. How little is left out of the years of toil from such a correspondent even as the Apostle Paul! Moreover, in the expectation of the speedy return of Jesus, who would usher in the new time of the 'age to come,' the claims of the present possessed an urgency which threw the idea of a literary provision for the future into the shade. Who would record the apostolic recollections for the sake of a posterity that would never see the light? And who would devote to such unprofitable labour the hours and the strength which might yet avail to rescue some lost souls from the doom that must otherwise overtake them? Besides, it was the method of the time to pass on by memory the stores of accumulated learning; and the Rabbis, who had piled up a mountain of oral law beside the Pentateuch, were in the highest degree averse to the idea of arranging it in literary form. 'Commit nothing to writing' was a well-known maxim of the Schools. The sayings of the famous teachers, their interpretations of obscure or doubtful rules, their decisions in perplexing cases, were handed on from one generation to another, until, after the final overthrow of the Jewish national hope, the first collection of them was made in the second century of our era, under the name of the Mishna. For hundreds of years in India, the ancient hymns, the books of ritual and philosophy, were transmitted in the same way. And at this day, in the schools at Jerusalem connected with the Mosque of Omar, on the very site of the Temple, the Korân is learned in like manner by constant

repetition. But these instances are not really parallel. The sacred lore of the Hindus was committed to a special caste, and the most careful safeguards were devised for its accurate preservation. The Christian tradition, on the other hand, was no fixed deposit, no rigid and unalterable form. As it passed from mouth to mouth, no years of initiation were demanded before it could be mastered and again handed on. Those who received and propagated it were not trained 'repeaters';[1] they were gathered from the harbour, the market-place, the shop, and there was no guarantee that nothing should be added, changed, or dropped, upon the way.

(1) That this was the actual method of early Christian instruction is proved, for example, by the language of the Apostle Paul. His allusions to the incidents in the life of Jesus are, indeed, but few. He speaks of his descent from David and his birth; he mentions the last supper, the betrayal, death, and resurrection. All these events had their place in his doctrine of redemption. But much more may have been included in what the Apostle—addressing the Church at Rome—describes as 'that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered' (*Rom.* vi. 17). This was to be firmly retained in personal memory, and in the life and usage of the community. 'Hold fast the traditions' (literally 'the deliverings'), he urges on the Corinthians, 'even as I delivered them to you' (*1 Cor.* xi. 2). The character of these traditions may be in part inferred from two prominent examples, that of the institution of the Lord's Supper (*1 Cor.* xi. 23-25), and that of the Resurrection (*1 Cor.* xv. 3-8). It is noteworthy

[1] The name given to reciters of different books of the sacred canon of the Buddhists.

that the account of the Lord's Supper is not followed by the text of any of our Gospels, though additions may be traced in the narrative of Luke bringing it into closer harmony with that of Paul. The beginnings of a collection of Christian literature may (in one aspect) be carried back to the Apostle's injunction that his letter to the Thessalonians should be read at a Church-meeting, *1 Thess.* v. 27. But so remote is it from the Apostle's mind to attach any weight to his literary productions, that among the different 'gifts' which he enumerates there are teaching and prophecy, there are tongues and their interpretation, but of writing and authorship there is not a word. There was absolutely no intention, therefore, of adding a fresh set of Scriptures to those already in existence. None would have been more surprised than its chief authors at the elevation of the New Testament to divine authority beside the Old.

(3) It is, however, easy to understand that the extension of missionary preaching would stimulate the demand for a permanent record of the traditions. The very fact of their propagation beyond the limits of their native home in Palestine, among those who knew little or nothing of the places and the persons with which they chiefly dealt, would make their committal to writing desirable. In the first place, few hearers would be satisfied with the meagre outlines supplied by such reports of apostolic discourses as that of Peter to Cornelius, *Acts* x. 34-43. These bare general statements helped to convey a few leading ideas; but they needed immediate enlargement with illustration and detail. The travelling preacher, again, who must pass on to the next town, and carried away with him the precious store of apostolic recollections, would naturally

desire to leave behind him some memorial of the truth. He might even himself record in his own fashion the words and deeds of the Master which he was accustomed to relate,[1] and from such sources might have proceeded some of those numerous attempts to present the Teacher's life mentioned in the preface to the Third Gospel, *Luke* i. 1-4. Many, says the author, had taken in hand to draw up a narrative of the things that had been fully established among them, in accordance with the traditions handed on by the original eye-witnesses and teachers (*i.e.*, the apostolic followers of Jesus). These traditions were already the subject of oral instruction. Theophilus, for whom he wrote, had been trained in them. To confirm Theophilus in this knowledge, he himself undertook to set forth the traditions in order, after having traced the course of all things accurately from the first. It is impossible to indicate more clearly that the reduction of the traditions to writing was not undertaken by apostolic hands.

(4) Even when the oral Gospel had acquired literary shape, we may readily comprehend that no single composition would embrace all the materials that were circulating through the Churches.

(*a*) Sayings that were received in one place might be unknown or even rejected in another: and narratives involving important doctrines might be repudiated by those to whom the doctrines seemed unreasonable. It is known, for instance, that the Gospel current among the Jewish Christians who were called Ebionites ('the poor'),

[1] The impulse to writing may often have proceeded from the necessity of fixing in Greek what had been originally 'delivered' in Aramean. Cp. below, § 3, 1, p. 25.

did not contain either of the narratives of the birth of Jesus now prefixed to our Matthew and Luke. The *Book of Acts*, xx. 35, reports the Apostle Paul as reminding the Elders at Ephesus of the words of the Lord Jesus, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' In various early Christian writings such sayings as the following are attributed to Jesus:

On account of the weak I became weak; on account of the hungry I was an-hungered; and on account of the thirsty I was athirst.

Those who will see me, and obtain possession of my kingdom, must lay hold of me through anguish and suffering.

Be ye good money changers.

If you are gathered in my bosom, and keep not my commandments, I will put you away, saying, Depart from me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity.

(*b*) But the Gospels themselves enable us to trace the manner in which the traditions might be gradually shaped, by defining what seemed indefinite, by modifying what seemed impracticable or austere, by filling up detail and thus completing and strengthening the general effect. Here are some instances: the margin of the Revised Version will supply plenty more. Sometimes the additions were on a tolerably large scale. The story of the woman taken in adultery was incorporated at an early date into the Fourth Gospel (*John* vii. 53-viii. 11), and was then generally received. The following Sabbath anecdote is inserted in the ancient manuscript bearing the name of Beza (preserved in the library of the University of Cambridge) after *Luke* vi. 5:—

On the same day, seeing one working on the sabbath, he said to him, O man, if indeed thou knowest what thou doest, thou art blessed: but if thou knowest not, thou art accursed, and a transgressor of the law.

But this addition did not win acceptance, and failed to find a permanent place. On the other hand the abrupt conclusion of *Mark* xvi. 8, 'for they were afraid,' was obviously incomplete; and two different endings to the Gospel were afterwards provided. That which is printed in the Revised Version, as an appendix, xvi. 9-20, is plainly later than the narrative of Luke (vv. 12, 13, referring to the Emmaus incident, *Luke* xxiv. 13-33), and shows some affinity also with the close of Matthew, cp. ver. 15, *Matt.* xxviii. 19; ver. 20, *Matt.* xxviii. 20. The other ending ran thus:—

> And all that had been enjoined on them they reported briefly to the companions of Peter. And after these things Jesus himself, from the east even to the west, sent forth by them the holy and incorruptible preaching of eternal salvation.

Sometimes the addition only serves to fill out the picture, as in *Mark* ii. 16, 'He eateth with publicans and sinners.' Eating implied drinking, and this in due time found its way into the text, which now runs 'He eateth *and drinketh* with publicans and sinners.'—The Church was accustomed to close the Lord's Prayer with an ascription of praise to God. Later generations attributed the words to Jesus himself: they were then attached to the prayer in *Matt.* vi. 13, 'For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.'[1]—When the disciples had failed to cast out a particularly violent evil

[1] A remarkable instance of the tendency to fill up gaps will be found in comparing the two forms of the Lord's Prayer, *Luke* xi. 2-4, according to the earlier text of the Revisers, and the *textus receptus* of the Authorised Version. The Christian Scribes added whole clauses to bring the prayer in Luke up to the standard of that in Matthew. See below, chap. vi. § 2, 2*b*.

spirit, they asked the reason of their Master privately. 'This kind,' so ran the answer, *Mark* ix. 29, 'can come out by nothing save by prayer.' Christian prayer, like its Jewish counterpart, was often accompanied with fasting. Here again later usage claimed the Teacher's sanction, and an augmented text ran 'by prayer and fasting.' The corresponding story in *Matt.* xvii. 20 ascribed to Jesus a different answer assigning the apostles' difficulty to their little faith. But the harmonizers of after days, desiring to bring them into some kind of agreement, added the enlarged verse of Mark, introducing it with a *but*:—

> But this kind goeth not out save by prayer and fasting.

In the first of the great contrasts between the old teaching and the new, Jesus introduced the new law of love thus, *Matt.* v. 21, 22:—

> Ye have heard that it was said to them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.

Here was an austere prohibition of all wrath, for within the kingdom all men were brethren. It seemed a demand too great for human attainment, and the Church took away its difficulty by limiting the doom to him who was 'angry with his brother *without cause*.'—When Jesus warned the disciples against pious display of charity and devotion, he bade them give alms and pray in secret, adding 'Thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall recompense thee.' Should not the world, then, know that love and piety received their reward? In the interests of religion it was desirable that the blessing should be

visible to all; and accordingly an amended version of the promise ran, *Matt.* vi. 4, 6, 18 :—

Thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee *openly*.

On the refusal of the Samaritans to receive Jesus and his disciples on their way to Jerusalem, James and John burst out in indignation, *Luke* ix. 54 :—

Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven to consume them ?

The incident of Elijah (*2 Kings* i. 10) was no doubt in the writer's mind, though he did not expressly allude to it. But a later scribe recalled it to the attention of his readers by adding the words '*even as Elijah did*'; and these were very widely copied. The story went on to relate that Jesus turned and rebuked them. 'What did the Teacher say?' enquired some devout disciple, anxious to lose no profitable word. In due time an answer found its way into some manuscripts :—

Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

Yet this was not enough. The case was only a particular application of a general principle, which a few versions of the story stated thus :—

For the Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.

The story of the Passion and the Resurrection, in Luke, has, in like manner, received many additional touches. The appearance of the angel in Gethsemane, and the sweat-like drops of blood, xxii. 43, 44, are marked by Dr. Westcott and Dr. Hort as early insertions, probably made in the West. How much simpler is the narrative of inward struggle, in its sublime intensity of anguish

and self-surrender. The words of Jesus on the cross, xxiii. 34, '*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do*,' are, in the same way, the early utterance of the Church, in the Master's spirit. The tendency to expand and define may be traced in the margin of the Revised Version all through *Luke* xxiv. Sometimes the additions are simply explanations; e.g. ver. 3, 'found not the body;' no reader could really be in doubt whose body; but for the sake of clearness, the words '*of the Lord Jesus*' were appended. Other insertions are of more consequence, as in vv. 12, 36, 40, 51.

If the traditions could thus continuously grow after they had been reduced to writing in the original forms of our Synoptics, it was still more easy for them to take up new elements before that process was complete.

§ 3. External Form of the Traditions.

Out of what materials would the traditions be composed, and what form would they assume?

(1) Naturally the teachings of Jesus would first of all rouse interest and claim attention. Every reader of the Gospels must have observed the tendency, common more or less to all the Synoptics, to throw them into groups. A whole sheaf of stories may be gathered out of the last days at Jerusalem. *Mark* iv. contains a little series of parables delivered by Jesus from the boat on the lake side. The same series, modified and enlarged to the sacred number seven, reappears in *Matt.* xiii. Luke assigns to the Teacher a Discourse upon the Plain (vi.); Matthew has a counterpart to it in the Sermon on the Mount (v.-vii.), which critics of almost all schools agree in regarding as a

collection of utterances rather than an actual discourse really pronounced on a single occasion. Into the great denunciation of the Scribes, *Matt.* xxiii., with its sevenfold 'Woe,' the Evangelist has thrust all that he could find of indignant rebuke amongst the Master's sayings. The prophecy concerning the 'last things' in *Matt.* xxiv., *Mark* xiii., *Luke* xxi., is based on various elements circulating in the early communities before Jerusalem fell. These collections passed as specimens of the teachings of Jesus on particular topics. They served as 'lessons' for the instruction of the Church. They obviously tended to incorporate into themselves more or less of the interpretations, the current ideas and phrases, as well as the positive reminiscences, of the Apostles. To take but one single instance:—Examine the literary structure of *Mark* iv. The scene is the boat, where the Teacher sits, pushed off a little way from the crowd beside the water's edge. He tells the story of the Sower and his seed (vv. 3-9). It is the first parable which the Evangelist relates, and he seems to feel that it needs an explanation. This is accordingly immediately inserted (vv. 11-20). But the boat was evidently no suitable place for such private exposition; it is introduced, therefore, by the statement (ver. 10), 'when he was alone.' Passing over vv. 21-25, (see below 2, *b*), we find more parables, vv. 26, 30, linked together by the words 'and he said.' These were, of course, addressed to the whole assembly from the boat. In ver. 34 there is a further allusion to subsequent explanations. But the time for them, at any rate, had not yet come. The Teacher is still face to face with the crowd. With untiring patience he speaks, they listen, all day long. Only at eventide does he propose to escape from their

eagerness by crossing to the other side (ver. 35). The disciples, then, 'leaving the multitude, take him with them, *even as he was*, in the boat.' The narrative passes on with its usual rapid movement. There is the storm, the calm, the cure of the Gerasene demoniac, and the return across the lake. In all this swift succession, where is the quiet hour for the long-deferred questions of the disciples? Is it not clear that there are here two layers of thought, the original story and the later interpretation? The story is primary, the explanation is secondary.[1] In these ways did the reports of the Master's sayings take up into themselves a considerable amount of material shaped under the necessities of the community. Such collections naturally began at Jerusalem. The language in which they were first made was the Aramean vernacular of the men among whom they arose. But they were by no means confined to the Jewish capital. They may have passed (as the statement of Paul shows us they passed, *1 Cor.* xi. 23), at first by oral transmission to other centres, to Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Rome. They did not always preserve the same form upon the way. First of all they were transferred into a new language—Greek. This would at once introduce divergences in the choice of word or phrase. Next the connections of specific sayings might be forgotten. The sayings themselves, detached from their context, might be modified. Independent

[1] Sometimes the story itself is secondary, and the explanation later still. In *Matt.* xiii. there is reason to think that the parable of the wheat and the tares, vv. 24-30, is a secondary formation out of the beautiful parable of the husbandman and the seed, *Mark* iv. 26-29. Then the interpretation, *Matt.* xiii. 36 sqq., is a sort of tertiary deposit, when the original significance of the story had been lost.

explanations might be offered by one or another of the apostolic teachers, and these in turn might be imperfectly understood or remembered by their hearers. Variations would thus inevitably creep in, and when the sayings were reduced to writing, they would be recorded in different order by different hands.

(2) The same liability to unconscious change would attend the reports of the events of the Teacher's ministry.

(*a*) In the first place the narrators would naturally endeavour to connect some pregnant saying with what they believed to be the incident which called it forth. But the recollection of the precise circumstances might have become confused; it might have become doubtful whether the scene was a synagogue or a house; the disease beneath which some sufferer was labouring might have been forgotten. Yet the principle for which Jesus was contending impressed itself deeply on the thought of his followers. His pointed questions, his homely illustrations, remained fixed in their minds. Accordingly we have such variations as the following around a common theme, 'Is it lawful to heal (or to do good) on the sabbath day?'

Matt. xii. 9-13.	*Luke* vi. 6-10.[1]	*Luke* xiv. 1-6.
And he departed thence, and went into their *synagogue;* and behold, a man having a withered hand. And they asked him, saying, *Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?* that they might accuse	And it came to pass on another sabbath, that he entered into the *synagogue* and taught: and there was a man there, and his right hand was withered. And the scribes and the Pharisees watched him,	And it came to pass, when he went into the *house* of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a sabbath to eat bread, that they were watching him. And behold, there was before him a certain

[1] Compare *Mark* iii. 1-5.

him. And he said unto them, *What man shall there be of you, that shall have one sheep, and if this fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?* How much then is a man of more value than a sheep! Wherefore *it is lawful to do good on the sabbath day.* Then saith he to the man. Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, as the other.

whether he would heal on the sabbath; that they might find how to accuse him. But he knew their thoughts, and he said to the man that had his hand withered, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. And Jesus said unto them, I ask you, *Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good, or to do harm? to save a life or to destroy it?* And he looked round about on them all, and said unto him, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so, and his hand was restored.

man which had the dropsy. And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, *Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath or not?* But they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go. And he said unto them, *Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a well, and will not straightway draw him up on a sabbath day?* And they could not answer again unto these things.

Here Matthew combines into one story the sayings which Luke distributes over two. The question was remembered; but it was uncertain *who asked it.* Matthew ascribes it to the authorities in the synagogue, Luke (in both cases) to Jesus. The substance of the illustration was remembered, but Matthew specifies a poor man's only sheep, while Luke mentions the common animals of burden and labour, an ox or an ass.

(*b*) In this way it becomes quite intelligible how the same saying may appear in different incidents. Thus it was remembered that Jesus had warned his followers

against self-seeking and ambitious desire of power. Here are two forms of the same utterance.

Mark x. 42-44.

Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all.

Luke xxii. 25-26.

The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

In Mark the words are addressed to the disciples when their indignation is roused by the request of James and John for the posts of honour on the right and left hand of Jesus in his glory, and the incident occurs on the journey to Jerusalem. Luke, with less probability, transfers them to the Paschal supper, and represents them as called forth by a dispute among the apostles as to which should be accounted greatest. In this case the meaning and force of the words remain unchanged. But in others the arrangement of the sayings in new connections may completely alter their significance. Consider, for instance, the diversity of interpretations which the following words receive in varying forms and contexts, starting from the place and meaning assigned to them by Mark, in the discourse delivered from the boat:—

Mark iv. 21-22.

And he said unto them, Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the

Luke viii. 16-17.

And no man, when he hath lighted a lamp, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a

bed, and not to be put on the stand?

For there is nothing hid, save that it should be manifested; neither was anything made secret, but that it should come to light.

bed; but putteth it on the stand, that they which enter in may see the light. For nothing is hid, that shall not be made manifest; nor anything secret, that shall not be known and come to light.

The passage occurs in connection with the parable of the Sower, and obviously refers to the propagation of 'the word,' which is not to be hidden away privately, but brought forth for the public good. But Luke again introduces the first saying in a slightly altered form elsewhere, xi. 33, as the prelude of the comparison to the eye which is the lamp of the body, thus:—

No man when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it in a cellar, neither under a bushel, but on the stand, that they which enter in may see the light. The lamp of thy body is thine eye: when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

Finally Matthew provides yet another application, v. 14-16, viz. to the duty of citizens of the new kingdom to show forth the light in their lives:—

Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a lamp, and put it under the bushel, but on the stand; and it shineth unto all that are in the house. Even so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The second maxim, *Mark* iv. 22, was again susceptible of varying adaptation. In slightly modified terms Luke employs it on another occasion, xii. 2, as a warning against false assumptions of piety and righteousness which were certain in the long run to be unveiled:—

Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

But there is nothing covered up, that shall not be revealed: and hid, that shall not be known.

Once more Matthew uses the very same words to encourage the disciple in times of danger or persecution, x. 25-26, by the assurance that the truth will triumph over all opposition :—

If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household! Fear them not, therefore; for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

A similar tendency to variation may be easily traced through the verses that follow the passage already quoted from Mark; cp. *Mark* iv. 23 with *Luke* xiv. 35, *Matt.* xi. 15; *Mark* iv. 24 with *Luke* vi. 38, *Matt.* vii. 2; *Mark* iv. 25, with *Luke* viii. 18, *Matt.* xiii. 12, and with *Luke* xix. 26, *Matt.* xxv. 29.

(*c*) The same cause supplies us with an explanation of the repetition or duplication of incidents. They become embedded in the traditions in different places; one collector adopts one and rejects another; a second editor finds a place for both. Thus Matthew and Mark each have two accounts of the feeding of the multitude; Luke has but one. Matthew and Mark each report twice over a stormy passage across the lake, when the disciples are in danger or labour hard at the oars. In one case, Jesus is with them in the boat; he is asleep, but they awake him; he rebukes the storm, and the waves grow calm: in the other, he comes to them, walking upon the water; he joins them in the boat, and the wind ceases. But Luke, perhaps regarding the second story only as a variation on the first, passes it by in silence.[1] Here is a pair of obvious duplicates :—

[1] See chap. iv. § 4, 2.

Mark xii. 38-39.

Then certain of the scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet.

Matt. xvi. 1, 2*a*, 4.[1]

And the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and tempting him asked him to shew them a sign from heaven. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it but the sign of Jonah.

Later editors of the Gospel recalled a passage where Jesus had contrasted the popular skill in interpreting the indications of the weather, with the failure to read aright the meaning of the age in which they lived, and the changes that were imminent. In *Luke* xii. 54-56, this thought is thus expressed:—

And he said to the multitudes also, When ye see a cloud rising in the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it cometh to pass. And when ye see a south wind blowing, ye say, There will be a scorching heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye know how to interpret the face of the earth and the heaven; but how is it that ye know not how to interpret this time?

The same thought was early combined with the second demand for a sign in Matthew, by the insertion of the following words before the condemnation of the evil generation:—

When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather; for the heaven is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the heaven is red and lowering. Ye know how to discern the face of the heaven: but ye cannot discern the signs of the times.

[1] See Revisers' Margin.

(*d*) Lastly, it would seem (in one case at least) that the tradition may have actually transformed the original material into a wholly new shape. The account of the fig-tree which withered away beneath the curse of Jesus, *Mark* xi. 12-14, 20-24, *Matt.* xxi. 18-22, has long been a stumbling-block to apologists for the Gospel narratives. But there is reason to believe that it is a kind of translation into incident of what was in reality a parable of the fate of unbelieving Israel, comp. *Luke* xiii. 6-9,[1] so that the tradition converted a story of symbolic meaning into the record of an actual occurrence.

(3) The incidents once fixed in more or less determined shapes would tend, in many cases, to fall together into more or less firmly knit successions. Thus Mark opens the account of the ministry in Galilee with the call of Simon and Andrew, James and John, i. 14-20; then follows the synagogue incident at Capernaum, i. 21-28; from the synagogue Jesus passes to the house of Simon, i. 29-31, where the mother-in-law of his host lies ill; the crowd gathers through the evening at the door, i. 32-34; to escape the concourse Jesus rises before the dawn and goes forth into a place apart to pray, i. 35; there Simon and his friends pursue him, and they go forth together into the next towns, i. 36-39. This series, which may have depended on Peter's reminiscence,[2] relates the events of but one single day. It was the introduction to the record of the Master's preaching; and served, like the groups of parables, or other discourses, as a Church 'lesson' describing how he set about the work. It was followed substantially by Luke, though Matthew, follow-

[1] For further discussion of this case, cp. chap. iv. § 4, 1.

[2] See below chap. v. § 4, 1; § 5, 1.

ing other principles of arrangement, departs widely from it.[1] A similar group, consisting of five anecdotes illustrating the kind of criticism to which Jesus was exposed from different quarters, and the character of the opposition which his bold unconventionality at once excited, follows in *Mark* ii.-iii. 6, cp. *Luke* v. 17-vi. 11. Other instances will be found in the combination of the scene at Cæsarea Philippi where Jesus is greeted as the Messiah by Peter, with the first warnings of his approaching death, and his Transfiguration; or the succession of incidents on the journey to Jerusalem, the blessing pronounced upon little children, the question of the rich young man, the petition of James and John, the passage through Jericho, and the entry from the Mount of Olives, this last (like the first) having a definite time-order running through it. These show the Teacher moving among men, among the religious parties whose discussions filled the air, among the common needs of daily life, in retirement with his disciples, or on the public highway. They are as clearly groups of incidents for instruction in the Master's methods of dealing with the circumstances round him, as the discourses are collections of his sayings for the edification of believers.

(4) The artless manner in which these incidents follow each other will be constantly observed. Two tendencies are in fact always at work as a tradition is propagated, in seemingly opposite directions; one is towards a certain vagueness, an absence of detail, a want of precision; while the other strives to correct these very defects by inserting names, and fixing places, and specifying dates and times. Many readers may have felt half consciously

[1] See chap. vii. § 2, 1.

that the presentment of the last days in Jerusalem has about it a greater air of vividness, a closer relation to the actual order of the occurrences, than the record of the Galilæan ministry. It is because the tradition was really formed first in Jerusalem. It was, already, therefore, removed from the scene of the Master's early labours. Cut off from its local base, it appears to have less exactitude; but in dealing with the events in the city, the Temple, the supper-room, it is on familiar ground. At a later stage, the desire for definiteness will assert itself. In the next century, the Syrophœnician woman will be called Justa, and her daughter Berenice. Yet further on, the names of every one of the seventy disciples (*Luke* x. 1) are known. This tendency is not without examples even in the Gospels. John alone—confessedly the latest of all—mentions that the name of the high priest's servant whose ear was struck off at the arrest of Jesus was Malchus; John alone attributes the blow to Peter. The tradition of Mark, with which Matthew agrees, is content to state that Jesus sent two of the disciples to make ready the passover: Luke only identifies them as Peter and John. After the first day in Capernaum, Mark relates, i. 39 —

> And he went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching and casting out devils.

Matthew, however, proceeds direct from the call of Simon and Andrew, James and John, without the opening scenes in Capernaum, to the far more comprehensive, and at the same time detailed, statement, iv. 23-25 :—

> And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people.

And the report of him went forth into all Syria; and they brought unto him all that were sick holden with divers diseases and torments, possessed with devils, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judæa and from beyond Jordan.

And this before a single word has been reported, or a single specific act described! Thus has the tradition become both generalised and defined.

§ 4. The Contents of the Traditions.

The foregoing examples have illustrated the effect of varying circumstance on the outward form of the traditions. It remains to be asked whether the contents correspond to the actual fact. It has already been shown that the same sayings might bear different meanings in varying combinations. But are the sayings themselves always correctly recorded; are the incidents with which they are linked accurately described? The whole of our enquiry will deal, in one form or another, with these questions. Only a few illustrations, therefore, are now offered, of the kind of influences which helped to mould the traditions on their way into our Gospel narratives.

(1) The apostolic witness all centred round one great idea. Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. When he had passed away, all reminiscence was steeped in this belief. By what processes his followers had arrived at this conviction need not now be examined. It is sufficient to observe that the recollections of his words and deeds were suffused with the glow of feeling which this faith excited. All memory palpitated with emotion,

which could hardly fail to impart to imagination a certain quickening power. Under its stimulus the testimony even of eye-witnesses rose unconsciously to meet the high demand for a fit account of Messiah's work. The magic of a wondrous personality, and the ardour of new-born trust, affection, hope, lifted men's thoughts into an activity greater than they knew. All the enthusiasm of the early Church for Jesus was poured into the Gospel tradition. With singular elasticity it gathered up elements derived from various sources, but all penetrated with the same assurance, and fused them with more or less completeness into the common mass. It is admitted that in the Fourth Gospel a new presentment of Jesus led to modifications of the Galilean story. These modifications were to a large extent conscious and intentional. In many of the Synoptic narratives a similar influence has been at work; but it has not operated so much by design as by the unsuspected changes wrought by time and faith. The idea of the Messianic dignity governs the whole. Again and again in the history of religion may like processes be observed. The legends of the saints are full of them; read the lives of our own Dunstan or Becket, of Francis of Assisi or Bernard, and you will find the traces of them at every step. In India, the story of Gotama, the founder of Buddhism, was early cast in the mould supplied by the theory of the 'Buddha' or the 'Enlightened One,' and all his teachings and the incidents of his career were conformed—partly by the unconscious working of creative imagination, and partly by purpose and method—to this type. The Bible itself, it has been already observed, presents more than one instance of the same kind of development. In the

patriarchal stories, in the narratives of the exodus, the wanderings, the conquest, in the successive codes of the law, in the representations of the origin of Israel's royal power, it is possible to trace the growth and manipulation of the traditions of centuries. In one case, imagination works on ancient legend, handed on orally from generation to generation; in another, it founds itself on actual written documents, which it embodies, or leaves on one side, as it likes, to suit its ends. Can we find any trace of the same treatment of its materials, oral or written, by the early Church?

(2) Not even Scripture itself was exempt from the danger of unconscious falsification under the potent influence of preconceived interpretations. The very words, though they could be verified at once, underwent transformation to suit the doctrines which they were to illustrate or support. For instance, in the second century, men began to ask themselves where Jesus had gone in the interval between death and resurrection, while his body remained in the grave. He had descended, it was thought, to the underworld, to preach to the spirits who waited his advent in Sheôl. If that was so, it would of course be found already intimated in the Old Testament; and Clement of Alexandria[1] discovered the witness of it in the following passage[2]:—

> Wherefore the Lord preached the Gospel to those in Hades. Accordingly the Scripture saith, *Hades saith to Destruction, We have not seen his form, but we have heard his voice.*

There are no such words in the Old Testament. What Clement cites as a Scripture testimony, is his own (or the

[1] About 190-203 A.D. [2] *Stromata*, vi. 6.

Church's) transformation of a verse in the magnificent description of Wisdom, *Job* xxviii. 22 :—

Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.

A little earlier, Justin the Martyr,[1] actually charges the Jews with having cut out of the prophecies of Jeremiah the decisive proof of the doctrine in these terms :—

The Lord God remembered his dead people Israel who lay in the graves, and he descended to preach to them his own salvation.

If such could be the effect of doctrinal belief in creating additions to the written records of ancient prophecy, it is hardly surprising that similar additions should be made to the unwritten prophecies of Jesus himself. When the Teacher was asked for a sign by certain of the Scribes and Pharisees, he replied, *Matt.* xii. 39, 41, cp. *Luke* xi. 29, 32 :—

An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet. The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, there is more than Jonah here.

But later editors of the tradition were not satisfied with the parallel which Jesus suggested. They demanded a closer conformity between the Messiah and the prophet; and they found it in an analogy between the interment of the Son of Man in the ground and the sojourn of Jonah n the 'great fish' which had swallowed him. This ex-

[1] About 150 A.D. *Dial. with Trypho*, 72.

pressed itself in an addition, thrust in between vv. 39 and 41, shattering their connection :—

> For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

The words have caused great difficulty to apologists, for on no theory of the resurrection was Jesus three days and three nights in the tomb. Moreover, they are clearly out of place in the story, for they imply a reference to his death, of which nothing has as yet been said. Their absence from the corresponding passage in Luke affords a strong presumption that they are among the latest additions to the Evangelic sayings.[1]—The foregoing instance does not, indeed, concern the actual quotation of Scripture. But examples of this, too, are not wanting in the Gospel narratives. Thus, the following parallels contain a common remodelling of a declaration in Malachi :—

Matt. xi. 9-10.	*Luke* vii. 26-27.
But wherefore went ye out? to see a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written.	But what went ye out to see? a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written,
Behold I send my messenger before thy face,	*Behold I send my messenger before thy face.*
Who shall prepare thy way before thee.	*Who shall prepare thy way before thee.*

The application is here to John the Baptist, who prepares Messiah's way. And under the impression of this

[1] See chap. vii. § 3, 1*a*.

meaning, the words have been appropriately adapted to it. For they really ran thus, *Mal.* iii. 1 :—

> *Behold I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me;* and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple.

The prophet here describes a manifestation of Yahweh himself. But the Church seized on the relation between the messenger and the Lord, and fitted it on to John and Jesus. The next step was to incorporate it into the Master's teachings; and in the process the words assumed a new shape.[1]—It would, indeed, have been interesting had the modern literary habit of reference guided our Evangelists. Then we should have known what was in the mind of the writer of *Matt.* ii. 22, 23 :—

> Being warned *of God* in a dream, he [Joseph] withdrew into the parts of Galilee, and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, that he [Jesus or Messiah] should be called a Nazarene.

No known oracle corresponds to this allusion. Had the Evangelist some lost or apocryphal document in his thought, or was his fancy only playing round some ancient word in which he imaginatively saw the name of Nazareth foreshadowed? The latter is the more probable: does it not, however, show with what ease doctrinal

[1] The same words are prefixed in *Mark* i. 2, to a quotation from *Isaiah* xl. 3, and appear under the name of that prophet. They are probably an insertion here, by some editor who was acquainted with their application in Luke or Matthew, and thought this a suitable place for adding this prophetic testimony to Mark. Then later copyists perceived the mistake of ascribing Malachi's words to Isaiah, and corrected thus 'Even as it is written *in the prophets*.'

interpretations could be converted into facts, and known events could react on prophecy?

(3) The conformity of the outlines of Messiah's life to prophetic intimations was a fruitful source of influence not only on the quotation of Scripture but on the Evangelical tradition itself. By degrees, the whole career of Jesus from birth to death was cast into this frame. It must be remembered that the application of Scripture in the Jewish Schools was often wholly independent of its original sense. In the discussions reported in the Talmud the argument is again and again concluded by the citation of a passage entirely remote from the matter in hand, and only externally connected with it by some casual word. The letters of the Apostle Paul show that the faintest resemblances sufficed to justify the combination of sayings which in their proper connection had no bearing on each other, or on the subject which they were employed to illustrate.[1] Moreover, the variations of the Greek version of the Scriptures known as the Septuagint (LXX.), and the habit of uniting into a consecutive whole utterances that were drawn from different parts of a book, or even from different books, further tended to give a forced significance to declarations which were thus distorted in form and wrenched from their proper context. The astounding misapplications of prophecy which may be seen in Justin's *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*, in the

[1] Thus in the vindication of the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, *Rom.* x. 15-20, a series of citations occurs which all receive in the Apostle's use a meaning which they do not bear in their original context. Note especially the manner in which *Ps.* xix. 4 is diverted from the poetic expression of the language of the heavens to support the proclamation of Christianity beyond the limits of Israel.

second century, show to what extravagances this method might be pushed. But the Gospels themselves contain clear instances of the way in which this reacted on the recollections of Jesus, shaping their contents and filling up their deficiencies. Reserving for future discussion the incidents of the nativity at Bethlehem,[1] let us examine one or two lesser illustrations of the same tendency. When Jesus is about to enter Jerusalem, he sends two of his disciples with these instructions:—

Mark xi. 2.	*Luke* xix. 30.	*Matt.* xxi. 2.
Go your way into the village that is over against you: and straightway as ye enter into it, ye shall find *a colt* tied, whereon no man ever yet sat; loose him, and bring him.	Go your way into the village over against you; in the which as ye enter ye shall find *a colt* tied, whereon no man ever yet sat; loose him, and bring him.	Go into the village that is over against you, and straightway ye shall find *an ass* tied, and *a colt with her;* loose them, and bring them unto me.

Mark and Luke, it will be observed, agree nearly word for word; and they mention only one animal. Matthew, on the other hand, names two. Why? The Evangelist himself explains:

> Now this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,
>
> Tell ye the daughter of Zion,
> Behold, thy King cometh unto thee,
> Meek, and riding upon an ass,
> And upon a colt the foal of an ass.[2]

The method of Hebrew poetry is to repeat, with a kind of rhythm, in the second part of the verse or clause, what has been already said in the first. The Evangelist,

[1] See chap. iii., § 1, 4*e*. [2] *Zech.* ix. 9.

misunderstanding the parallel style, supposed that the prophecy really referred to two animals. He accordingly put them into his story, and actually represented Jesus as riding into the city upon both :—

Mark xi. 7.	*Luke* xix. 35.	*Matt.* xxi. 7.
And they bring *the colt* to Jesus, and cast on *him* their garments, and he sat upon *him.*	And they brought *him* to Jesus, and they threw their garments upon *the colt,* and set Jesus thereon.	And [they] brought *the ass and the colt,* and put on *them* their garments, and he sat thereon.

Again in recording the events of the Passion, a singular variation betrays a similar influence :—

Mark xv. 23.	*Matt.* xxvii. 34.
And they offered him wine mingled with *myrrh;* but he received it not.	They gave him wine to drink mingled with *gall;* and when he had tasted it, he would not drink.

Mark's statement refers to the custom of offering to the sufferer a draught which should at once stupefy and support him under his pain. But Jesus would not thus deaden his thought, or die benumbed in spirit; he would endure all with full consciousness. Matthew, however, turns the drink, embittered with gall, into an aggravation of the torture. For what reason? Because (it would seem) he recalls and applies the Psalmist's word[1] :—

> They gave me also gall for my meat;
> And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.

In the sufferings and death of Jesus the Church found abundant fulfilments of the description of the fate of the Servant of Yahweh, *Isaiah* lii. 13-liii. These passages were readily applied by pious believers, who may have written them first on the margin of their Gospel-scrolls,

[1] *Psalm* lxix. 21 cp. *Luke* xxiii. 36.

whence they finally passed into the text itself. Thus to Mark's narrative, xv. 27 :—

> And with him they crucify two robbers; one on his right hand and one on his left—

later copyists added the prophetic application[1]—

> And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was reckoned with transgressors.

But in another version of the tradition, *Luke* xxii. 37, these words are awkwardly put into the mouth of Jesus himself, as he bids his disciples prepare for the future by taking purse and wallet and sword :—

> For I say unto you, that this which is written must be fulfilled in me, And he was reckoned with transgressors: for that which concerneth me hath fulfilment.
>
> And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords :—

where the answer refers to the words preceding the quotation. Messiah's death was, in fact, the great difficulty which the early Church had to overcome. Paul found that it was 'to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness.' There was all the more need, therefore, to show that it was in conformity with prophecy. Accordingly we find such variations as the following, where Luke justifies by reference to the prophets, the warnings which the Evangelists attribute to Jesus.

Mark x. 33, 34.	*Matt.* xx. 18, 19.	*Luke* xviii. 31-33.
Behold we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and the scribes; and they	Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and scribes; and they	Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, *and all the things that are written by the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son*

[1] *Isaiah* liii. 12.

shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles; and they shall mock him, and shall spit upon him, and shall scourge him, and shall kill him; and after three days he shall rise again.	shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him unto the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify; and the third day he shall be raised up.	*of man.* For he shall be delivered up unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shamefully entreated, and spit upon; and they shall scourge and kill him; and the third day he shall rise again.

The motive of Luke's variation is plain. But behind this lesser modification, stands a further question, how far do these detailed predictions represent the language of the Teacher himself, or how far are they rather to be understood as the pious expression of the faith of the Church? It will be more easy to form some opinion on this enquiry when other illustrations of the action of this and cognate tendencies have been examined. It need only be observed now that these repeated announcements (e.g. *Mark* viii. 31, ix. 31, x. 33-34) wholly failed in their object. They did not succeed in preparing the minds of the disciples. The Master's death crushed all the hopes of his followers: the first tidings that he was risen were not received as a triumphant confirmation of a trust which ignominy and ruin could not overwhelm: they were scorned as 'idle tales.' Does not the Gospel narrative itself reveal to us the later growth of these elements in the tradition?

(4) Another powerful factor in shaping the contents of the Teacher's word, is doubtless to be found in the social circumstances of the community. The Gospel was at first addressed to the poor, and it was among the poor

that it found its warmest reception and its most earnest support. It was, indeed, supposed by some that the afflicted and needy were in a special sense the objects of the providence of heaven. A certain merit seemed to be associated with innocent suffering; want might almost be taken to imply virtue; poverty and desert went hand in hand. This belief, for instance, underlies the form in which Luke presents the Beatitudes, in comparison with Matthew. Consider the influences which have led to such modifications as these[1]:—

Matt v. 3-12.

Blessed are the poor *in spirit;* for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst *after righteousness:* for they shall be filled.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Luke vi. 20-26.

Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled.

Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

* * * * * *

But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation.

* * * * * *

In the same way the references to reproach and persecution, to expulsion from synagogues, to trials before foreign governors and kings (e.g. *Matt.* v. 11, x. 17-18, *Luke* vi. 22, xii. 11, &c.), seem rather the reflection of later difficulties and dangers than the actual utterance of Jesus in the first flush of Galilæan success. The words (in their present form) express rather the comforts of the Church for believers than the expectations of the Teacher himself. Similar influences have given point to predictions of internal dissension, of false prophets, and

[1] See chap. vi. § 2, 2*b*.

unauthorised performers of mighty works, cp. *Matt.* vii. 15, 22, &c. So, also, in the regulations for pious observance, for alms and prayer and fasting as a kind of religious duty or sacred service, each in turn confirmed by the rhythmic promise 'thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee,' *Matt.* vi. 1-18, we hear the voice of later ecclesiastical usage. Why should the disciples of the new Teacher fast? 'New wine must be put into fresh wine-skins;' new truth could not be thrust into old forms and rites, cp. *Mark* ii. 18-22. And when they prayed, it should be in faith, for strength for heroic enterprises, not as a modification of Jewish custom in a better spirit, cp. *Mark* xi. 22-25. The rules for dealing with a brother who has sinned, betray the same influences in the form in which they now stand, *Matt.* xviii. 15-18. The 'church' whose authority may be invoked, is very different from the Master's 'kingdom of God'; and the rejection of the unrepentant evil-doer on to the level of the heathen or the publican hardly savours of the tireless love which came to seek and to save the lost. Here, likewise, may we not say, the practice of the later community seeks shelter under the Founder's sanction?

(5) The Gospel tradition sprang up on Jewish soil, and those who gave to it the first outline of its shape were Jews. Many of the questions which arose in the new community, issued from their customs and obligations as Jews. Their ideas of conduct and religion were naturally those of Jews. Their conceptions of righteousness and faith were consequently closely related to the ancient Law. It was from that side that they approached the teachings of Jesus. Whatever in them

seemed to harmonise with their own notions—modified as they had been by their intercourse with the Master—they naturally emphasized. And that which stood on different plane of thought and life they would record imperfectly, because they had understood it imperfectly. On the other hand, at an early period a new principle emerged into view through the labours of the Apostle Paul. It presented the Christian character in a fresh light. It was not the result of a higher legalism, the fulfilment of a law—diviner, indeed, but still a law; it was the outcome of a spiritual affection, which, under the name of faith, transfigured the whole nature into a fellowship with God and Christ. This produced out of the fulness of inner life the richest fruits of holiness, which were rather a spontaneous growth from the new quickening infused into the heart, than the positive achievements of a regulated and disciplined will. Both these aspects were blended in the soul of Jesus. But they could only have been reproduced by those who, through kinship of spirit, fully understood and realised them. It was inevitable that they should be only partially apprehended; and it is not surprising that the tendency to the old type of legal righteousness should occasionally assume exaggerated forms, so as apparently to sanction the extremest demands of rigid observance. Standing on the broad ground of humanity in its relation to God, Jesus lays down in the briefest terms the resulting principle governing, for instance, all sabbath-doings, *Mark* ii. 27 :—

The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath

Yet elsewhere, *Matt.* xxiii. 2, 3, cp. v. 17-19, the same Teacher is said to lend his authority to that mountain of

sabbath-legislation piled up by the Rabbis, which, as they observed, hung suspended by a hair:—

> The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; *all things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe.*

Here the permanent obligation of the whole body of scribe-made law is strictly enforced, including, of course, the rules for the hallowing of the sabbath. How can we reconcile this with the declaration but a short while before, *Matt.* xxii. 40, that on the two commandments of love to God and love to man 'hangeth the whole law, and the prophets'?[1]

(6) Connected with these different views of the essential nature of the Christian life was the question of the scope of the gospel, and the relation of the Gentiles to the kingdom of God. This was the battle which was fought and won by the Apostle Paul. The cause of freedom was not gained without long struggles and bitter opposition. The advocates of the obligation of the Law sent out their emissaries into Asia and Greece. Parties were formed bearing rival names, Paul, Apollos, Cephas (Peter); while, at Jerusalem, the most austere devotion to the Law was supposed to have been practised by James. These conflicts left their marks on the gospel-tradition formed in their very midst. Had Jesus authorised or had he prohibited the preaching to the Gentiles? 'Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans,' says Matthew's Jesus to the Twelve (x. 5). But Luke's Jesus organises a special mission of Seventy disciples on his way through Samaria to Jerusalem (x. 1). Nay, Matthew's Jesus himself gives

[1] On the legal elements of Luke and Matthew see chap. vi. § 5, 1, and vii. §4, 4.

contradictory instructions. The injunction to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel exclusively (x. 6) is explained by the belief that the 'end of the age' was so near at hand that they should 'not have gone through the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come' (x. 23). But in the last scene of all, the end of the age is indefinitely postponed. Instead of a Son of man who is to come in clouds of heaven with power and great glory, there is a risen Christ who tells his disciples he is with them 'alway, even to the end of the age;' and the command then is, 'Go ye and make disciples of all the nations' (xxviii. 19-20). So, even the same Gospel may contain, without really combining, widely different views, resulting from different periods and representing different tendencies of Church development.[1]

(7) Besides the influences thus operating upon a positive tradition, which was rooted in actual reminiscence of the Master's life, there are further elements for which it is difficult to believe that there is real historic ground. The accounts of the Nativity are not only mutually inconsistent,[2] but they cannot be fitted into the rest of the narrative. They must be regarded as symbolic; they express beliefs, they portray ideas, they do not relate facts. In other stories we may discern a similar significance. Their function is not biographical but devotional. The Temptation does not describe a literal event; its succession of scenes is imaginative and dramatic; it is not concerned with the times and places of earth; it belongs to another world of thought and

[1] On Matthew, see below, chap. vii. § 4, 5; on Luke, chap. vii. § 5, 3.

[2] See chap. iii. § 1, 1.

feeling, where truth is conveyed by pictures which awake emotion, rather than by the methods of documentary history, of science, or philosophy. The Transfiguration, and many other narratives, do but throw into the forms of personal incident the reflections of the Church on the Master's life, viewed at one time in relation to the spiritual powers which preceded him, at another in connection with the great movement which issued from him. The gospel-traditions were shaped at a time when love and insight were in the highest degree creative. In their treatment of the past the Christian teachers did not deal with it on modern principles, endeavouring to estimate the conditions, calculate the forces in operation, measure their interaction, and read off the effect. They fixed their gaze always on the divine goal to which they saw all things tending. In their view this was no 'far-off event,' it was close at hand. The purpose of God, as they understood it, was their standard. Whatever brought that into clear prominence, deserved their trust. Hence it is that the Synoptic narratives present to us the Jesus of ecclesiastical belief, the idealised Christ as he was interpreted and received now by one party, now by another. To find the real Jesus we must learn to penetrate through the radiant haze with which he has been invested by tradition and faith.

CHAPTER II.

THE MESSIANIC IDEA.

We all know how easily our judgments of persons and events are affected by our particular sympathies and prepossessions. The same acts are attacked or defended from opposite points of view in politics. The lives of eminent statesmen have been written in our own day in the spirit of enthusiastic devotion or of bitter hostility, and though the same incidents might be related, and the same speeches quoted, the two portraits came out entirely different. If this is the case where events are recent, facts easy to ascertain, and words within reach of verification, how large an allowance must be made for the transforming influence of ideas and feelings upon a tradition detached from its native soil, translated into another language, and propagated by men who had had no part in the circumstances which it described. Aspects of character and thought are variously apprehended by diverse minds. The Greek teacher Socrates was described in one way by one of his hearers, Xenophon, and in quite another way by another, Plato; while a third observer, Aristophanes, portrayed him differently from both. And when imagination endeavours to delineate the past in the

light of great principles, it tries to picture to itself what must have happened, and frames its narrative so as to give these principles full scope. The writer of the Book of Chronicles, believing in the antiquity of the religious institutions of his own day, carried them back to the pious kings of ancient time, and drew a picture of David and Asa and Hezekiah which expressed to his thought the traditional repute of these princes, much in the same way as later English story delighted to delineate the heroic forms of Arthur and Alfred. A similar process has been at work along other lines in the Fourth Gospel. Is there any one great idea influencing the representation of Jesus in the First Three?

This question has, in fact, been answered by anticipation, chap. i. § 4, 1. The dominant idea in the Synoptic narratives is that Jesus is the Messiah or Christ. The Gospel according to S. Mark opens with the words—'The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.' This was the theme of apostolic preaching from the earliest days: 'Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ,' *Acts* ii. 36. This, according to the Book of Acts, is the word of Peter at Jerusalem or Cæsarea; Philip proclaims it in Samaria; Paul carries it to Damascus, through Asia Minor, into Greece, and never stops till in Rome itself he preaches the kingdom of God, and teaches 'the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ,' *Acts* xxviii. 31. All great ideas have a history behind them; they have gathered up into themselves many elements; they have expressed themselves in changing forms. What elements of this Messianic expectation do we find in the Gospels, what form did it assume in the minds of the followers of Jesus?

§ 1. The Idea and its Forms.

(1) The roots of this enduring hope lay in the teachings of the Hebrew prophets about Yahweh and his people Israel. Looking out upon their people in the land they loved so well, they sought to explain to themselves how it was that Israel alone possessed the precious knowledge of Yahweh, while the nations around worshipped other gods. They found the answer in the thought that Yahweh had chosen Israel, and placed it in its fruitful country, and made it a people, out of his pure love. To that love he would be always faithful: from that choice he would never swerve. But such love laid on Israel the high duty of being worthy of it; and such a choice contained within it a secret purpose. If the true religion was committed to Israel, it was in order that Israel might be the instrument for spreading it among the nations. So, on the one hand, the prophets told of the need of Israel's purification, and of the discipline by which it would be cleansed from its idolatries and sins; and they held up before it the idea of right conduct for all classes within it. And on the other they uttered glowing words of a future when the knowledge of Yahweh should be diffused by its means through all the world. The prophets of the monarchy thought that the first great aim—the internal purification of Israel—would be attained under a righteous king, who would rule with justice and wisdom beneath the guidance of the divine spirit.[1] He would be of the house of David, and

[1] Inasmuch as the king of Israel reigned in the name of Yahweh, God of Israel, and was consecrated by the ceremony of anointing with oil, he was called Yahweh's 'Anointed,' (Hebrew *Mashiach*, Greek *Christ*). Thus Saul is called Yahweh's *Messiah* (in the Greek

would restore the ancient glory of his house. And then the nations would flock to Jerusalem; thence would the teaching go forth which should tell all men how to walk in the ways of Yahweh.

When the monarchy was overthrown, the hope of a Davidic prince faded into the back-ground. But in the hour of triumph, at the restoration of Israel after the captivity, the new joy broke out in the ringing cry 'Yahweh is King,' and poured itself forth in psalms of praise of the heavenly rule, made manifest in the return of the people to their ancient home. This strain did not soon fade away. Even later still it might be clearly heard, as in these verses, *Psalm* cxlv. 10-13:

All thy works shall give thanks unto thee, O Yahweh,
And thy saints shall bless thee.
They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom,
And talk of thy power;
To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts,
And the glory of the majesty of his kingdom.
Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And thy dominion endureth throughout all gene ations.

(2) On this conception the thought of Israel fixed with a tenacity which no suffering could shake. In time of trouble the cry for justice went up with passionate plea, calling for a great world-assize, when the nations should be summoned to the judgment before the throne of God, and the persecutors should be overthrown. The Book of

version 'the Lord's *Christ*'), *1 Sam.* xxiv. 10. The name might even be applied to a foreign king acting under the purposes of Yahweh. It is thus given to Cyrus by one of the Prophets of the Captivity, *Is.* xlv. 1, 'Thus saith Yahweh to his *Messiah* (Greek *Christ*) to Cyrus.' Hence the title came to be employed in later times to designate the ideal king round whom gathered so much of the national hope.

Daniel, written under the stress of the persecution by Antiochus Epiphanes, which began in 168 B.C., gave vivid utterance to it. Looking back over the later history of his people, the writer traced the succession of mighty empires East and West—Babylonian, Median, Persian, Greek—which had, as he thought, ruled over it. They bore the shapes of beasts of prey, symbolic of brute strength, greed, and ferocity. The thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat in the midst; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The nations were gathered for the judgment, and the books in which the deeds of men had been recorded were opened. The dominion of the beasts was taken away; the sway of the alien powers was broken; but to whom was the sovereignty awarded? Through the darkness of the night the seer gazed, until a new form appeared, *Dan.* vii. 13-14:—

> And behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even unto the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Who is this mysterious figure 'like unto a son of man'? It is plain at once that it is a symbol like the lion, the bear, the leopard, which represented the great Gentile empires. But it is nobler than they, it wears a human form, and stands for other qualities than those of bestial appetite and worldly might. We are not long left in doubt; the writer explains his own vision; the majestic personage to whom the perpetual sovereignty over all the

nations is assigned is the purified Israel, who will rise into glory and receive the obedience of all worldly powers :—

> And the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom [*i.e.*, the kingdom of the holy people] is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him. *Dan.* vii. 27, comp. vv. 17-18.[1]

So the great hope won fresh expression, and book after book in Palestine or Egypt bore witness to the activity of Jewish imagination, as it played round the central themes of deliverance, judgment, and the triumph of the true religion over the hostile powers of the world. Some of these books, like the Sibylline Verses, the Book of Enoch, the fourth Book of Ezra, became popular among the early Christians, and after a common literary fashion received considerable additions at their hands. It has even been thought, and not perhaps without good ground, that the book now placed last in our New Testament, the Apocalypse, or Revelation, was originally a Jewish work, dealing with the national hope, which was adapted for Christian purposes and suited to the ideas of the Church.[2]

[1] Cp. Driver. *Daniel* (Cambridge Bible), pp. 102-105.

[2] The general group of ideas connected with the judgment and its allotments of recompense and doom has received the name of 'Eschatology,' or the doctrine of the last things. The importance of this element in early Christian teaching is now winning clearer recognition in this country, largely through the labours of Dr. Charles, whose treatise on *Hebrew and Christian Eschatology* (1899), together with his articles in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible* and in *Encyclopædia Biblica*, forms the best English exposition of the subject. Students will, of course, consult also his translations of the books of *Enoch*, *The Assumption of Moses*, *The Ascension of Isaiah*, *The Apocalypse of Baruch*, and *The Book of Jubilees*.

(3) Current expectation, then, had already its doctrine of the 'kingdom,' long before John or Jesus proclaimed that it was at hand.

(*a*) In the first place, it would be in no distant scene; Jerusalem would be its centre; the familiar hills would witness the great judgment. The questions concerning its manifestation related to its time and not its place. This epoch was hastening to its end, and a new era would begin; 'this age' would be brought to a close, and the mighty world-event would usher in 'the age to come.' All life on earth, therefore, was distributed between these two periods: happy would it be for those who should be fitted to enter the coming age by well-doing in this. This age,' said a famous Teacher, 'is like a vestibule to the age to come. Prepare thyself at the vestibule, that thou mayest be admitted into the hall.' 'Great is the Law,' said another Rabbi, 'which gives life to those who practise it in this world and in the life to come.'

(*b*) It could hardly be supposed, however, that the age then running out would pass away without any sign; still less would the coming age arrive unobserved. The language of prophecy had delighted to depict the sympathy of nature with man; under the reign of righteousness the moon should be as bright as the sun, the sun should shine with seven-fold brightness, and even among the fiercest beasts of prey there should be universal peace. The convulsions which would attend the last efforts of the heathen against Israel, would, in like manner, be mirrored in the world without. The heavens would reflect the carnage below; there would be swords in the sky, said the Sybil, and battles in the clouds, while the sun would be eclipsed. No rain

would fall upon the earth, predicted Enoch; the fruits would be stopped, the moon would not appear, and the stars would wander from their courses. When the world around was thus out of joint, it would not be surprising that society should suffer, and crime multiply. These things would be the 'birth-pains' of Messiah. Ere he appeared, voices long silent would be heard once more with a last warning; Elijah, Jeremiah, Moses himself, would come again, to prepare the way for the new kingdom.

(*c*) The kingdom itself bore different names, and might be viewed under different aspects. Inasmuch as it was a kingdom set up, in the language of Daniel (ii. 44), by 'the God of heaven,' it might be called the 'kingdom of God,' the 'kingdom of heaven,'[1] or even 'the kingdom of the firmament.' But these latter names were in no way descriptive of the locality of the realm of the future; they implied its character, they did not indicate its site. There was, indeed, a sense in which the kingdom of God — the acknowledgment of his sovereignty—the endeavour to obey his will—was a present spiritual fact. Whoever repeated the great confession of Jewish faith called (after its first Hebrew word) the *Shemá*, beginning 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God,' was said to 'take upon himself the kingdom.' But pious fancy always loved to cast

[1] This use of the word 'heaven' as equivalent to 'God' is not uncommon in Jewish writings. Even in the New Testament it is not without example, *Luke* xv. 18, 'I have sinned against heaven.' In China, the great sage Confucius always preferred to speak of the supreme power under the ancient designation, *Tien*, sky, 'heaven,' rather than as *Shang-te*, 'supreme ruler,' the personal title bestowed also on the Emperor.

its thoughts into pictures; and as in the Book of Daniel the writer had portrayed the awful form of the Ancient of Days upon the throne of judgment, so did the author of the Revelation behold the throne set in heaven, whereon sat the Lord God, the Almighty, before whom the four and twenty elders gave thanks because he had taken his great power and did reign, *Rev.* iv. 2-11, and xi. 16-18.

(*d*) These visions of the heavenly rule seemed to dispense with any earthly representative of the Most High. But it was sometimes thought that God would choose for himself some other being, human, or superhuman, to be the instrument of carrying out his purposes. His will might realise itself, so the Sibyl taught, through the prophets, as judges and just kings of mortals; or again through a single ruler:—

> Then shall God send a king from the sun, who shall cause the whole earth to cease from wicked war, when he has slain some, and exacted faithful oaths from others. Neither shall he do all these things of his own counsels, but by trust in the beneficent decrees of the great God.[1]

Whether the king would appear in the age that then was, or in that which was to come, or in some interval between the two, was indeed uncertain. Springing from the ancient royal line, he would be known as 'Son of David'; the heathen enemies would be overthrown; some would perish, but some would be converted; and over these he would extend his beneficent sway, the seat of which would be in the City of David. The venerable walls of Jerusalem should be miraculously glorified, and

[1] *Sibylline Oracles*, iii. 652-6. For another description see the *Psalms of Solomon*, xvii. 23-47.

a new temple should arise within it. By this renovation, indeed, it would correspond to the ideal city, the heavenly Jerusalem, as it had existed from the beginning of the world; and there the outcasts of Israel, scattered through many lands, should re-assemble.

(*e*) Not Israel only, however, would be gathered at their ancient capital. Fondly supposed to be the mid-point of the earth, Jerusalem would be the scene of what the Apocalyptic writers called 'the great Judgment,' 'the great Day,' 'the day of Judgment,' 'the last Judgment for all eternity,' the concourse of nations being marshalled in the valley of Jehoshaphat beneath the city walls. Would this tremendous event take place before or after Messiah's reign? The question was answered by different seers in different ways. So, too, was another question—who would be the judge? Said the *Book of Enoch*:—

> The Most High will exalt himself in that day to hold the great judgment upon all sinners.

But in the *Psalms of Solomon* judgment is regarded as a permanent function, rather than as a single event, and it is entrusted to the ideal king:

> He shall bring together the holy people, whom he shall lead in righteousness, and he shall judge the tribes of the people made holy by the Lord his God. And he shall not suffer iniquity to abide in their midst, nor shall any man dwell with them knowing wickedness. He shall judge peoples and nations by the wisdom of his righteousness.

Lastly, the judgment would not be passed exclusively upon the living. The dead also would be summoned to it. For them, therefore, a resurrection was decreed: they would assume again the bodily forms which they once had

worn. Yet these would not be needed long; they would undergo transformation corresponding to the lot assigned to their possessors, the wicked being cast into Gehenna, while the good were exalted to the splendour of angels or the brightness of stars.

§ 2. The Idea in the Gospels.

(1) Conceptions similar to these meet us in the First Three Gospels at every turn. They are expressed in the language of the common hope, with which they are often in clear correspondence. In some cases they have doubtless acquired new meanings; but the general framework which they supply for the teachings of Jesus, closely resembles the forms just described. A few instances will make this plain.

(*a*) The message of John the Baptist was summed up in the words 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand': and this, in the same manner, according to *Matt.* iii. 2, iv. 17, was the first utterance of Jesus. The term is not used in any local sense; it does not denote a territory or realm, but a government or power. And the significance of this power depended on the mode of its exercise or manifestation. By what means would God's sway be realised? Would he delegate his control to a representative from heaven, or would he in some way reserve it to himself? It is not necessary now to ask what was the difference between the idea of the kingdom as Jesus taught it, and that of his fellow-countrymen. It is sufficient to observe that this was from first to last the main theme of his teaching. Parable after parable sets forth the silent diffusiveness of its growth; one discourse after

another lays down the way of life for those who would belong to it: and as though to verify the Jewish maxim that that prayer is not a prayer which contains no mention of the kingdom, the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples comprises the petition 'Thy kingdom come,' with its explanatory sequel 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' Save in one passage, *Luke* xxii. 29, 30,[1] Jesus does not speak of the kingdom as his, any more than did his predecessor John the Baptist, or the disciples whom he sent forth to preach, appropriate the kingdom as theirs. The rule and sovereignty belong to God alone.

(*b*) The doctrine of the inwardness of the kingdom might seem to render distinctions of time superfluous. But the First Three Gospels contain frequent references to the age that now is, and the age that is to come. 'In this time' shall the disciple who has given up all for the Teacher's sake, receive houses and brethren and sisters and mothers and children and lands a hundredfold, with persecutions, and 'in the age to come' eternal life, *Mark* x. 28-30. When the Sadducees seek to throw discredit on the doctrine of a life hereafter by an absurd case of complicated relationships, they are met by a reply which assumes this distinction, *Luke* xx. 34, 35 :—

> The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage; but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage.

On the gravest of sins, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, is pronounced the awful doom, *Matt.* xii. 32 :—

> It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this age nor in that which is to come.

[1] Of doubtful authenticity on other grounds. Cp. chap. vi. § 5, 1.

(*c*) By what marks, then, would the passage from one to the other be recognised? When Messiah would appear to usher in the coming time, what warnings would inform the faithful that he was near at hand? 'Tell us,' cried some of the twelve to Jesus as he sat on the Mount of Olives, 'what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the age?' *Matt.* xxiv. 3. The discourse which answers this question ignores the principle laid down elsewhere by Jesus, 'the kingdom of God cometh not with observation,' *Luke* xvii. 20, and describes at some length the commotions in earth and sky which will attend the calamities in which the age that now is will expire. There will be wars, earthquakes, and famines, *Mark* xiii. 8; these will be the beginning of travail, the 'birth-pains' of Messiah are at hand. They will be followed by portents above; the sun shall be eclipsed, and the moon will cease to shine; the stars will fall from their places, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken, *Mark* xiii. 24, 25.

(*d*) When 'the age to come' is inaugurated, on what terms may life amid its blessings be secured? That is the meaning of the question put to Jesus by the lawyer, *Luke* x. 25, or the rich young man, *Mark* x. 17. The 'eternal life' which they desired to win, was in reality admission to the privileges of the kingdom, a share in the glories of Israel's future. That future was sometimes known as 'the regeneration,' *Matt.* xix. 28, or rather 'the renovation' or 'renewal'—the renovation of Nature, the renewal of Jerusalem. Or again, as it would be preceded by the resurrection, it was itself designated by that term. 'In the resurrection,' ask the Sadducees, whose wife shall she be?' of all the seven who had her

to wife, *Mark* xii. 23. 'Thou shalt be recompensed' is the promise of Jesus to the generous host 'in the resurrection of the just,' *Luke* xiv. 14. The nature of the resurrection-body was a frequent subject of discussion in the Jewish schools; would the dead rise maimed and halt, or whole and sound? They would enter into life as they quitted this; for Jesus, using the physical imagery of the time, declares it better to 'enter into life' with only one eye, or hand, or foot, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the fiery Gehenna, *Mark* ix. 43, 45, 47, cp. *Matt.* xviii. 8-9. The Rabbis settled that the lame or the dumb would rise with their defects, and then be healed.

(*e*) Finally, all future expectation converges in the Gospels on the judgment day. There must men give account of every idle word that they may speak, *Matt.* xii. 36; there will the terrible sentence be passed on the unfaithful who are still clamouring 'Lord, Lord'—'I never knew you,' *Matt.* vii. 22, 23. Then will the Son of man 'render to every man according to his deeds,' *Matt.* xvi. 27; and as he sits on the throne of his glory, all the nations shall be gathered before him, *Matt.* xxv. 31 sqq. Beside the picture drawn in this parable, let us place an earlier one from the *Book of Enoch*, where God himself, the Lord of the sheep, casts out the wicked and gathers in the good. The scene is the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, where the real and the ideal are curiously blended. The angelic rulers of Israel are first condemned and thrown into a fiery abyss. Then follow the apostates of Israel, and after they are judged the new Jerusalem appears.

And I saw at that time how a like abyss was opened in the

midst of the earth, full of fire, and those blinded sheep [the apostates] were brought, and they were all judged and found guilty and cast into that fire abyss, and they burned: now this abyss was to the right of that house [Gehenna, the ancient valley of Hinnom on the south of Jerusalem]. And I saw those sheep burning, and their bones burning. And I stood up to see till he folded up that old house; and all the pillars were taken away, and all the beams and ornaments of the house were folded up with it, and it was taken off and laid in a place in the south of the land. And I saw the Lord of the sheep till he brought a new house greater and loftier than that first, and set it in the place of that first which had been folded up: all its pillars were new, and its ornaments were new and larger than those of the first ones which he had taken away, and the Lord of the sheep was within it. And I saw all the sheep which had been left, and all the beasts on the earth, and all the birds of the heaven, falling down and doing homage to those sheep, and making petition to and obeying them in every word. . . And those sheep were all white and their wool was abundant and clean. And all that had been destroyed and dispersed, and all the beasts of the field, and all the birds of the heaven, assembled in that house, and the Lord of the sheep rejoiced with great joy because they were all good, and had returned to his house. And the eyes of them all were opened to see the good, and there was not one amongst them that did not see. And I saw that that house was large and broad and very full.[1]

In another book also bearing the patriarch's name, written (probably) in Egypt by a contemporary of Jesus, and recently made known in this country from an ancient Slavonic version, we find an account of the 'inheritance' prepared for the righteous on the one hand, and the wicked on the other. In the third heaven is the Paradise of Eden, where angels keep the garden with continuous song.

And I said, 'what a very blessed place is this!' And those men spake unto me: 'This place, O Enoch, is prepared for the righteous

[1] *Enoch* xc. 26-36, translated by Prof. R. H. Charles.

who endure every kind of attack in their lives from those who afflict their souls; who turn away their eyes from unrighteousness, and accomplish a righteous judgment, and also give bread to the hungry, and clothe the naked, and raise the fallen, and assist the orphans who are oppressed, and who walk without blame before the face of the Lord, and serve him only. For them this place is prepared as an eternal inheritance.'[1]

(2) The framework of the Messianic idea in the First Three Gospels thus corresponds point by point with the externals of the popular expectation. What further indications do these documents offer concerning the central figure which this framework encloses?

(*a*) The prophets had declared that the ideal king would spring from David's house. This further hope expressed itself in the Targums by which the sacred Hebrew books were rendered into the common speech of the people, and the interpretations handed down in the Rabbinical schools. It was uttered likewise by the poet of the *Psalms of Solomon* not long after 48 B.C.:

Behold, O Lord, and raise up for them their king, son of David, for the time which thou knowest, O God, that he may reign over Israel thy servant.

The popular greeting, accordingly, which hailed Jesus as Messiah, addressed him by this title. Under this name did the blind beggars of Jericho appeal to him, as he passed out of their city on his way to the capital, *Matt.* xx. 30-31; in this capacity did the multitude herald his

[1] *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch* (edited by Morfill & Charles), viii-ix. A description of hell and its torments follows, and the crimes for which it is the punishment. 'For all these this place is prepared for an eternal inheritance.'

entry into Jerusalem, *Matt.* xxi. 9. When Jesus enquired of the Pharisees 'What think ye of the Christ? Whose Son is he?' the answer came promptly back 'the Son of David.' Jesus, indeed, appears to have disowned the name. Quoting a passage from the 110th Psalm, popularly, though unhistorically, attributed to David, and supposed to refer to the Messiah, 'The Lord said unto my Lord,' he observed that if David described the Christ as his Lord, the Christ could not be his Son, *Matt.* xxii. 41-45; and to this argument the representatives of the traditional expectation seem to have been unable to reply.

(*b*) Another title bears an unmistakable official meaning 'Son of God.' It is quite true that this phrase might be used in a high spiritual sense. It took its rise from very early ideas of the kinship between a people and its God. In ancient days the Deuteronomic prophet had on this ground bidden his people avoid all heathen customs of mutilation and mourning for the dead, *Deut.* xiv. 1:—

> Sons are ye of Yahweh your God; ye shall not cut yourselves nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead.

The relationship thus indicated might be conceived more and more inwardly; 'those who enter future blessedness,' said the Sibyl, 'are called sons of the great God'; 'they are all sons of their God' declared the poet of the Psalms of Solomon; 'blessed are the peacemakers,' said Jesus, 'for they shall be called sons of God.' But when it is applied to Jesus specifically, it is undoubtedly employed with a different and more technical purpose; it is, in fact, the express designation of the Messiah.

Thus in the opening verse of *Mark* i. 'the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ,' an important reading, adopted by our Revisers, adds the title 'Son of God.' It is, however, never used by Jesus of himself. The echo of it is heard in the divine voice at the baptism, 'Thou art my beloved Son;' it is attributed to the tempter in the wilderness, 'If thou art the Son of God;' it is the sum of Peter's triumphant declaration, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;' it is the attestation on the mount of transfiguration, 'This is my beloved Son, hear ye him;' it is the essence of the high priest's charge upon the trial, 'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?' it is the verdict of the centurion beside the cross, 'Truly this man was the Son of God.' It would seem from these instances that it was one of the current Messianic terms, but it cannot be discovered in any of the earlier literature concerning the Messianic idea. Yet it is not perhaps difficult to account for its employment. In prophetic thought Israel had been the child of Yahweh's love. 'Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh,' so ran the commission of Moses, 'thus saith Yahweh, Israel is my son, my firstborn,' *Ex.* iv. 22. 'When Israel was a child,' said Hosea, pleading in Yahweh's name, 'then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt,' *Hos.* xi. 1. When the monarchy was established, and the king ruled as God, as the very angel or representative of Yahweh, cp. *Zech.* xiii. 8, so that his throne was founded and guaranteed by the powers of heaven, this title passed to him. 'I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever, I will be his father and he shall be my son.' Such was the promise of Yahweh to David, *2 Sam.* vii. 13-14, in the language of prophecy;

and it was repeated in the poem which described the reign of the expected king, *Psalm* lxxxix. 26-27 :—

> He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father,
> My God, and the rock of my salvation.
> I also will make him my first-born,
> The highest of the kings of the earth.

This exalted view of the sovereign was, indeed, common to many ancient nations. Before the days of Moses it was carved upon the Egyptian temples. Among the copious inscriptions of Rameses the Great, in the fourteeenth century, B.C., occurs the following dialogue between the great god Amun-Ra and the king :—

The God. 'I am thy father, I have begotten thee like a god, all thy limbs are divine. I have fashioned thee to be the joy of my person. I have brought thee forth like the rising sun.'

The King. 'I am thy son, thou hast put me on thy throne, thou hast transmitted to me royal power, thou hast made me after the resemblance of thy person, thou hast transmitted to me what thou hast created. I shall answer by doing all the good things which thou desirest.'

With such thoughts as these it was natural for the Hebrew poet, describing the vain efforts of the nations against Yahweh and his Messiah, to portray in dramatic colloquy the high dignity of the king, who might be said, on the day when he received power, to be begotten of Yahweh, *Psalm* ii. 4-8 :—

The Poet. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh :
Yahweh shall have them in derision.
Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath,
And vex them in his sore displeasure :—

Yahweh. Yet have I set my king
Upon my holy hill of Zion.

The King. I will tell of the decree:
Yahweh said unto me, *Thou art my son,*
This day have I begotten thee.
Yahweh. Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance,
And the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

From this passage probably arose the designation 'Son of God.' Its employment was doubtless facilitated by another meaning which the phrase bears in the Old Testament. The belief in One God which Israel attained through the labours of the prophets, was not incompatible with belief in many other exalted powers also. Between man upon earth and the 'Most High' in heaven there was a vast interval which Hebrew imagination filled with superhuman beings. These were called in the language of poetry 'Sons of God'; they formed the retinue of the King above the skies; when the world was made they 'shouted for joy,' *Job* xxxviii. 7, and they offered to the sovereign of the universe perpetual worship of thankfulness and praise, *Ps.* xxix. 1. But they were not confined to the abodes above. They sometimes passed to earth as messengers of the divine will, and returned to present themselves before their Lord, cp. *Job* i. 6, ii. 1. So they acted as protectors or guardian spirits of the righteous, *Dan.* iii. 25, 28. Or, with larger functions, they served as patrons or prince-angels of whole nations. Such was Michael, the 'prince' of Israel, and such were the 'princes' of Persia and Greece, *Dan.* x. 13, 20, 21. Might not Messiah, as the agent of Yahweh's purpose for his people, be likened to these manifestations of superhuman power? This meaning of the term ran side

by side with its application to the Davidic king, and each may have strengthened and supported the other. Opposite conclusions have, indeed, been drawn from the same facts; and certainty in these difficult enquiries is impossible. But the use of the title by the Apostle Paul, e.g. *Rom.* i. 4, as well as its employment by the high priest when Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin, implies that it had a recognised significance in this connection. Messiah was already, as Israel's guide and representative, what the whole people should be; nay, according to Paul, what all humanity was in the divine intent; for the official meaning passes over in Paul's thought into the spiritual, as he realizes that 'as many as are led by the Spirit of God, are Sons of God,' and looks forward to the time when 'the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God,' *Rom.* viii. 14, 21.

(*c*) One more title ascribed to Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels bears upon it the Messianic impress, 'Son of man.' This is the name by which Jesus again and again speaks of himself in the forms of his sayings which have come down to us. Many of what we think his most characteristic utterances embody it: 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost;' 'The Son of man hath not where to lay his head;' 'The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' In passages of this description it was formerly supposed that the term was used in the prophetic sense, in which the prophet Ezekiel, for example, is repeatedly addressed as 'Son of Man' by 'the word of Yahweh;' or it was explained as the title by which Jesus desired to show his oneness in the broadest sense

with men's sufferings and needs, and offered himself as the humble self-abasing servant of humanity. Other interpretations have been founded on what is believed to have been the meaning of the Galilean vernacular, *bar nasha*, which is regarded (just as in ordinary Hebrew) as simply equivalent to 'human being.' Man, in this view, is the Lord of the sabbath, *Mark* ii. 28, which was made for him; and Man possesses the high authority to forgive sins, *Mark* ii. 10.[1] There are, however, yet other sayings in which the name has a plainly different meaning, as at the trial, when Jesus replies to the question of the high priest, 'Ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven,' *Mark* xiv. 62, cp. viii. 38 and xiii. 26. Whether Jesus really intended in these words to identify himself with the 'Son of man' we cannot now enquire. It is sufficient to note here (1) what was the origin of this imaginative language, and (2) what was the application made by the disciples. It was founded unquestionably on the description of the judgment in the vision of Daniel (see above § 1, 2), where the kingdom was given to 'one like unto a son of man' who 'came with the clouds of heaven'; and it was undoubtedly applied by the apostles to the Teacher himself. How far the words in Daniel were popularly understood to refer to the Messiah, it is not now possible to determine[2]: in later days it was said that 'if Israel

[1] The best English exposition of recent investigation into the use and meaning of this title will be found in two articles by Dr. Drummond, in the *Journal of Theol. Studies*, 1901, and the articles in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, and *Encycl. Bibl.* Cp. Muirhead, *The Eschatology of Jesus*, 1904, Lect. iv.

[2] The language of *Enoch* xlvi., and other passages in the Simili-

behaved worthily the Messiah would come in the clouds of heaven: if otherwise, humble and riding upon an ass.' If, however, the disciples imagined that Jesus was himself the Son of man in the Messianic sense, it is probable that this is the meaning intended by the Evangelists in all the passages where the name occurs. They understood these utterances to contrast the lowliness of Messiah's earthly lot, both with the popular expectations of his royal pomp and with the heavenly glory which they believed he would one day assume.

(*d*) Another term deserves a word of notice, 'the Lord.' Though it occurs but once in the First Three Gospels on the lips of Jesus himself, it is used with special frequency in narrative by Luke. The title 'lord,' (Greek *Kurios*, Hebrew *Adhôn*) is applied in the New Testament through a wide range of relations. It denotes ownership, as in the case of the possessors of the colt on which Jesus rode into Jerusalem, *Luke* xix. 33, and designates the master who rules a household of slaves. It is the respectful address of the Pharisees to Pilate, *Matt.* xxvii. 63, R.V. 'Sir,' and marks the submission of Festus to the imperial Cæsar, *Acts* xxv. 26. In a higher scale it is the natural salutation for an angel, *Acts* x. 4; and finally, it is the equivalent of God, *Mark* v. 19,

tudes xxxvii.-lxxi., is under strong suspicion of interpolation by Christian hands; and it cannot be satisfactorily proved from this book that the term was a recognised designation of Messiah, though the possibility must be certainly admitted. On the other hand, the language of Paul concerning the second man 'from heaven' points to a doctrine of some kind of heavenly type (in the *Secrets of Enoch* xxiii. 5 every soul is said to have been 'created eternally before the foundation of the world').

Luke viii. 39, in the Old Testament sense.[1] Within these limits what is its significance when applied to Jesus?[2] It may be nothing more sometimes than the title of courtesy from an inferior to a superior, *Luke* v. 12; the parallel in *Mark* i. 40 omits it. An intenser but still undefined meaning may lie in Peter's exclamation 'Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord,' *Luke* v. 8.[3] Elsewhere it is distinctly associated with the character of Jesus as Messiah, through its combination with the recognition of him as 'Son of David,' *Matt.* xv. 22, xx. 30. This is its undoubted sense when it is used of him descriptively again and again in *Luke* vii. 13, x. 1, 39, &c.[4] Here it means something more than the Teacher, it is equivalent to the Christ. The origin and significance of this special application are somewhat difficult to trace.

[1] It is well-known that the later Jews shrank from pronouncing the sacred name Yahweh. They accordingly replaced it, in reading their Scriptures, by the word *Adhonay*, 'my Lord.' In the Greek translation known as the Septuagint this was rendered by *Ho Kurios*, 'the Lord,' in which form it appears in our English version. It is quite possible that the application of the same term to God and to Jesus, though in different senses, aided the processes of thought and imagination which finally led to the belief that they were 'of the same substance.'

[2] It may be added that its Babylonian equivalent *Mar* sometimes bore the meaning of Teacher, and was also employed in address like the title Rabbi which is bestowed on Jesus in the Gospels. In the Aramaic phrase in *1 Cor.* xvi. 22, '*Marân athâ*,' 'Our Lord is coming,' it stands for *Kurios* in the Pauline sense.

[3] The addition of the English 'O,' which manifestly improves the rhythm, and gives greater solemnity, is no more needed here than in similar cases of address.

[4] It may be noted that Mark and Matthew only employ it thus after the Resurrection, *Mark* xvi. 19, 20, *Matt.* xxviii. 6.

But it certainly implies the exalted, and possibly even the superhuman, nature of Messiah. In the ancient speech of the Deuteronomic prophet, Yahweh is 'God of gods and Lord of lords,' *Deut.* x. 17, where the term 'lord' coupled with 'god' appears to denote an order of beings beyond those of earth.[1] The phrase in *Ps.* cx. 1, 'Yahweh said unto my lord,' commonly interpreted in the Jewish schools in reference to Messiah,[2] does not necessarily carry with it this higher meaning. Neither does the expression 'Christ [the] Lord,' which occurs in the Psalms of Solomon,[3] require it. But the language of the Apostle Paul seems clearly to approach the antique sense of Hebrew Scripture, when he observes *1 Cor.* viii. 5, 6 :—

> There are gods many and lords many, yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him ; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him.[4]

The frequency of the title 'lord' in the writings of the Apostle must have struck every reader ; again and again it replaces the name Christ ; 'the Lord's death,' for example, which is proclaimed every time that the bread

[1] So also *Is.* xxvi. 13, 'O Yahweh our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us,' though the interpretation is doubtful.

[2] Cp. *Mark* xii. 36, 37, and parallels.

[3] *Ps. Sol.* xvii. 36. There does not seem adequate reason for doubting the reading. Comp. *Luke* ii. 11.

[4] In the phrase 'king of kings and lord of lords,' *Rev.* xix. 16, the word seems to be somewhat differently employed. The term was widely used in Gentile theology, as the language of inscriptions shows in Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt. The equivalent *dominus* was a title of the Roman emperors, and Domitian's secretary could begin a letter on behalf of his master with the words *Dominus ac deus meus*, 'my lord and god.'

is broken in remembrance of him 'till he come,' *1 Cor.* xi. 26, is, of course, Jesus Messiah's crucifixion. The current identification of Messiah with the 'Lord' in *Ps.* cx. 1, was at once transferred to Jesus, who is said to have been made by God 'both Lord and Christ,' *Acts* ii. 36. In this sense it passed into narrative about him, and in this sense it is placed once, but only once, on his own lips. When he is about to enter Jerusalem for the last time, he sends two of the disciples to fetch the colt on which he will ride and he adds, *Mark* xi. 3 :—

> And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye, The Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him back hither.

How far this actually represents the language of Jesus himself, who does not elsewhere thus directly assert a Messianic claim, must remain doubtful. It can hardly however, be pleaded that the title here means nothing more than 'the Teacher.' Is it, perhaps, one of the delicate signs that the Gospel according to Mark (as well as Luke) was written under influences proceeding from the Apostle Paul?[1]

(*e*) When the unclean spirits fell down before Jesus, according to *Mark* iii. 11, they cried, saying 'Thou art the *Son of God*.' In the synagogue at Capernaum, so the same gospel relates, *Mark* i. 24, the man with an unclean spirit addressed Jesus in these words, 'I know thee who thou art, the *Holy One of God*.' It is plain from the usage of these two terms that they are practically identical, and are both employed as designations of Messiah. What is intended, then, by the title 'Holy One

[1] See chap. v. § 5, 3.

of God'? Like the corresponding designation 'Son of God,' it is a survival or application of an older phrase. The ancient meaning of the word 'holy' seems to be that which is 'separated,' marked off from the rest, as the clean from the unclean, the heavenly from the earthly, the divine from the human. So it came to be in some special sense a name of Him who transcended all mortal weakness and sin, as when Yahweh says, *Hos.* xi. 9 :—

I am God, and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thee.

Hence it is often used in prophetic speech to designate the national God. Yahweh is emphatically the 'Holy One of Israel.' But it was also extended to the larger circle of superhuman beings who surrounded Yahweh's throne and constituted his heavenly court, like the 'Sons of God.'

And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Yahweh ;
Thy faithfulness also in the assembly of the *holy ones*.
For who in the skies can be compared unto Yahweh ?
Who among the *sons of God* is like unto Yahweh ?
A God very terrible in the council of the *holy ones*,
And to be feared above all them that are round about him ?
Ps. lxxxix. 5-7.

Here it is plain that the 'Holy Ones' are identical with the 'Sons of God' or 'sons of the gods,' the angel-powers who carry out the will of the great King who reigns in incommunicable majesty above them all.[1]

[1] Compare *Deut.* xxxiii. 2, 3, *Zech.* xiv. 5 (read 'with him,' instead of 'with thee,' following the Greek of the LXX), *Job* v. 1. xv. 15. It is to be regretted that in *Ps.* xvi. 10 (cp. *Acts* ii. 27, xiii. 35) our translators have used the term 'holy' to express, another Hebrew word, better rendered 'godly,' though the Greek version correctly employs a different term.

From their abodes in heaven they watched the ways of the children of men, and from time to time descended with some message revealing the rule of the Most High, *Dan.* iv. 13, 17. Out of such a band came forth Messiah, leader and champion of the righteousness of heaven against the demonic powers, whom he would arrest and overthrow.[1] The spirits of evil discerned in him the consecrated agent of their doom: and as the disciples afterwards confessed Jesus to be 'God's Messiah,' so with earlier recognition did the demons acknowledge him as 'God's Holy One' or 'Son of God.'

(*f*) One more conception associated with Jesus in his Messianic character must be briefly considered. Beside the ideal king whom ancient prophecy and later hope awaited, stands another figure embodying a different thought. The 'Servant of Yahweh,' as he is presented to us in the prophecies of the Captivity, holds no dominion, and is invested with no sovereignty. His first function is that of Teacher, he is to carry forth the truths of Israel's religion to the world, *Is.* xlii. 1-4:—

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen in whom my

[1] In *Acts* iii. 14 the word 'Holy' passes from the special Messianic sense iuto the higher moral meaning, associating with itself the further description 'the Righteous One.' With this may be compared the term 'chosen' or 'elect,' cp. *Luke* ix. 35, xxiii. 35. This was the designation of the Servant of old, *Isaiah* xlii. 1, cp. above (*f*), and both terms 'the righteous' and 'the elect' are applied to Messiah in *Enoch* xxxviii. 2, and passages quoted in Charles's note, though the same epithets are also applied to the faithful themselves, who are described as 'the elect righteous' in this very place: 'When the Righteous One shall appear before the eyes of the elect righteous . . . . and light will appear to the righteous and the elect who dwell on the earth,' etc.

soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgement [religion] to the nations. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the dimly burning wick shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgement in truth. He shall not burn dimly nor be bruised, till he have set judgement in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his teaching.

It is not necessary now to discuss the exact scope of this beautiful symbolic personality, in its relations either to the different classes of captive Israel, or to mankind at large. The Servant has many functions; when he first appears, it is his duty to proclaim the good news of Yahweh's redemption of his people; he is charged to declare the message of comfort, grace, and hope. For this he has been specially chosen and endowed; and so, from the anointed King, Cyrus,[1] the divine instrument, through Babylon's overthrow, of Israel's liberation, the prophet turns to the anointed Teacher,[2] the divine instrument, through his word, his sufferings and death, of Israel's justification. Now in later times, the interpreters of the prophetic writings boldly identified the 'Servant of Yahweh' with the Messiah. Without stopping to enquire how far the lowly messenger of 'judgment' could really blend with the kingly form of David's son, they inserted in the traditional paraphrase used in public worship [3] the word 'Messiah' after 'my servant' in *Is.* xlii. 1 and xliii. 10; and the same addition was made at the opening of the remarkable passage in lii. 13. Nor was the identification thus effected altogether dropped in subsequent stages

[1] *Isaiah* xlv. 1. [2] *Isaiah* lxi. 1.

[3] These paraphrases of the Scriptures into the vernacular Aramean were known as Targums.

of the description of the Servant's fate. The strange name applied to Messiah in the Talmud, 'the Leprous,' was founded on his bruised and stricken form, liii. 4, 5; while his future glory, when 'he should see his seed,' liii. 10, was to be realised 'in Messiah's kingdom.' Thus did the Scriptures seem to portray another type of Messianic function; and this type acquired important prominence in the early Church. In the method of the Teacher who sought to keep his healing acts concealed, the believer saw the likeness of one who would not strive nor cry, *Matt.* xii. 16-21. When the 'possessed' went away sane, it was because he had taken their infirmities and borne their diseases, *Matt.* viii. 17, cp. *Is.* liii. 4. Nay, according to the Gospel of Luke, Jesus formally assumed, as his first public act, the Messianic character in this special sense. In the synagogue at Nazareth he opened the roll one Sabbath day, and read, *Luke* iv. 18:—

> The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> Beause he hath *anointed* me to preach good tidings to the poor:

and then declared the prophetic word fulfilled in himself.[1] As at the beginning, so likewise at the close of his ministry is the same thought implied; for in his death, Jesus, like the Servant, was 'numbered with transgressors,' *Luke* xxii. 37. How far this aspect of Messiah's work had been realised by popular imagination at the time of Jesus, it is impossible to estimate. In the stream of Apocalyptic literature it has no place at all. It is unconnected with the doctrine of the two ages; it is independent of the royal line of Judah; it seems on

[1] On the significance of this incident, see chap. vi. § 4, 5, § 5, 3,

a different plane from the visions of the New Jerusalem, or the great judgment of the Son of man. It lies altogether apart from the expectations of those who hoped that Messiah would 'restore the kingdom to Israel,' *Acts* i. 6. Yet its presence in the Gospels is palpable. We may not always be able to accept as genuine the incidents or sayings through which it is expressed. But when we try to trace it back to its source, shall we be wrong if we ascribe it, at least provisionally, to Jesus himself?

§ 3. Transformation under the Influence of Ideas.

Here, then, are numerous elements in the Gospel story connecting it with contemporary thought and hope. When the life of Jesus was told under their influence, it was inevitable that recollection should shape itself into accord with them, and that when recollection failed, imagination should supply its place. As 'Son of David' his descent is traced from David, and he is born at Bethlehem. As 'Son of God' he is conceived by miracle; and his Messianic function is divinely attested at his baptism and transfiguration. As 'Son of man' he is expected to return in clouds of glory with pomp of angels and with trumpet-blast. These conceptions worked on the actual remembrance of his words and deeds, and where the tradition was silent, called fresh stories into being in which the same ideas sometimes took divers forms. That this process went on outside the Gospels is certain: let us examine a case reported to us by Papias, whose preference for what he supposed to be first-hand oral testimony has been already mentioned (Introd. p. 4).

(1) Among the features which would mark the Messianic age, prophets and poets had loved to dwell on the sympathy of nature, typified by the increased productiveness of the ground. Round this theme, also, later fancy fondly played. Here is a description in *Enoch* x. 18, 19 :—

In those days will the whole earth be tilled in righteousness, and will all be planted with trees, and be full of blessing. All desirable trees will be planted on it, and vines will be planted on it. The vine which is planted thereon will yield wine in abundance, and of all the seed that is sown thereon will each measure bear ten thousand, and each measure of olives will yield ten presses of oil.

Once started, this idea ran to yet further and wilder developments. The *Apocalypse of Baruch*[1] gave still fuller promises, xxix. 5 :—

The earth will yield its fruit ten thousand-fold; and on one vine there will be a thousand branches, and each branch will produce a thousand clusters, and each cluster will produce a thousand grapes, and each grape will produce a *cor*[2] of wine.

Now compare with these the following description attributed by Papias to Jesus, and quoted by Irenæus.[3]

The elders who saw John, the disciple of the Lord, related that they had heard from him how the Lord used to teach in regard to these times and say: 'The days will come in which vines shall grow, each having ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each true twig ten thousand shoots,

[1] This book, like *Enoch*, is certainly composite, but cannot be so easily resolved into its constituent documents. Prof. Charles believes some portions to be earlier, others later, than the fall Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

[2] About 75 gallons, 5 pints.

[3] See Introd. p. 2.

and in each one of the shoots ten thousand clusters, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every grape when pressed will give five and twenty metretes of wine. And when anyone of the saints shall lay hold of a cluster, another shall cry out, "I am a better cluster; take me, bless the Lord through me."' . . . . . And these things are borne witness to in writing by Papias, the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp, an ancient man, in his fourth book; for there were five books compiled by him. And he says in addition, 'Now these things are credible to believers.' And he says that when the traitor Judas did not give credit to them, and put the question, 'How then can things about to bring forth so abundantly be wrought by the Lord,' the Lord declared, 'They who come to these [times] shall see.'

The process in the growth of this story is highly instructive. A somewhat vague and indistinct remembrance of the prediction now found in the Apocalypse of Baruch was shaped into more definite precision of detail. Cut loose from its original source, it was referred to Jesus, and its exaggeration was still more exaggerated. Then came the question, 'What did the disciples say?' and the incredulity which would not be repressed, was ascribed to Judas, the Apostle's enquiry in its turn calling forth a reply from 'the Lord.' Finally, in the confused state of current testimony, the whole story was attributed to the 'disciples of the Lord.' Irenæus no doubt supposed that Papias had heard it direct from John. No one believes that Papias intentionally invented it; but no one believes either that he had received it from an apostle. It shows how easy it was for the Church to mould and shape the tradition of the sayings of Jesus under the unconscious influence of existing ideas, and even to ascribe to him words founded upon a book not written till long after he had passed

away. If this might happen with a tradition outside the present Gospel range, why should it not have occurred within their limits?[1] We may doubt how far it is possible to trace this tendency; but we cannot doubt that it was actually at work. Before we proceed to investigate in detail its operation in the Gospel narratives, let us glance at one or two similar instances of its influence in other fields.

(*2*) One of the biographers of Francis of Assisi, his disciple Thomas of Celano, relates that towards the close of his life the saint resolved to celebrate the Nativity at Christmas tide with a real manger. The peasants from the country round flocked into the church, and lo, within the manger there lay the infant Jesus, asleep. In an ecstacy of gratitude and adoration the saint bent over him, and the babe awoke and smiled. Even so, says Thomas, did Christ awake anew in men's hearts through the labour and the love of Francis. The good father tells his story, as if it were a real occurrence, and then, in all simplicity, lets his readers into the secret; it was, after all, only an idea translated into an event. But the idea, once started, grew with astonishing speed, until mediæval Italy saw in Francis the reproduction of the Saviour's life. All kinds of stories arose to show the resemblance between the saint and his Lord: and these were finally gathered up into the 'Book of Conformities,' in which the wonders of St. Francis were set side by side with those of Christ. The list was introduced by an astonishing series of Old Testament parallels and types. Concerning his birth, which had been foretold beforehand by an angel, it was related that as Simeon

[1] On *Luke* xi. 49-51, *Matt.* xxiii. 34 sqq. see chap. vii. § 3, 1*b*.

took the child Jesus in his arms, so did a pilgrim which was an angel come to the house and ask to see and touch the infant Francis; and when at length, in consequence of his importunity, the babe was brought to him, he embraced it, and after declaring his future greatness, straightway disappeared; nor did anyone in Assisi see him more. Like his Master, Francis knew what was in man; nor did he read the human heart alone, he understood the animals as well, so that every creature obeyed his sign. As Jesus ate with publicans and sinners, so Francis, being in the forest, desired certain thieves to come and eat with him, saying 'Brother thieves, come and eat with us, for we are brethren'; and thus he sought and saved the lost. Before him the winds grew calm and the air serene; fire abated its heat, and water turned into wine. At his touch disease disappeared; he cleansed lepers by the laying-on of his hands: and through him the Lord Jesus raised more than thirty dead. Ere his death he was transfigured, being seen by the brethren raised aloft in the air, with his arms outspread after the manner of a cross, and encompassed with a shining cloud. His prayer for participation in the sufferings of Christ was answered by the appearance of the marks of the nails on his hands and feet. After his death his body could not be found; he had risen, and he appeared again and again to his disciples.—Was all this only a tissue of crude inventions, of deliberate falsehoods? By no means; it was the manner in which pious veneration gave form to the profound impression which Francis made on his age. As no other man had ever done, he renewed the Christian ideal, and revived the impulse of the Christian life. The religious imagination had no

sooner perceived one analogy, than it created another. The life of the saint must have resembled that of his Lord not only in its spirit, but also in its details.[1] The force of this inference is not apparent to us; but it was felt with undiminished energy by generations of disciples who shaped the legend of Francis to match the Gospel story, without any consciousness that they passed the bounds of truth.

(3) But, it may be alleged, in the case of Francis of Assisi the Christian type was in the field already, and had already possession of men's hearts. Given the Gospels, we can understand that the devotion of ignorant and superstitious monks should produce something bearing a far-off resemblance to the figure they portray. But the Gospel stories cannot themselves be explained by this process, for the ideal which they delineate did not exist beforehand. Is this objection conclusive? Let us briefly consider a parallel instance from the history of religion in India.

More than five hundred years before the birth of Jesus, there seems to have been a wide-spread expectation in certain portions of the valley of the Ganges, that the 'Great Man' would appear. It was believed that this hope was founded upon the ancient Mantras or Scriptures; and it was anticipated that the 'Great Man' would fulfil

[1] Even now the visitor to the church at Assisi built on the site of the house in which Francis was born, is shown an arch beside one of the doors. 'Through that arch,' says the priest, 'his mother passed into the stable to give birth to the saint.' In the great church of St. Mary of the Angels, reared over the ancient chapel of the 'Little Portion,' is a panel on a pulpit showing how after his death the saint descended to the underworld to preach to the spirits in prison.

one of two careers. If he chose the ordinary life of the householder, he would become a Universal Monarch, ruling in righteousness; but if he resolved to leave his home and give up the world and seek for truth, for the sake of his fellowmen, he would become a Buddha, an Enlightened One, Teacher of gods and men. When it was enquired how such a Being would be recognised, the Brahmans answered that according to their sacred books there were thirty-two marks by which he would be distinguished. Whoever could show that he possessed these upon his person, was entitled to be received as the Great Man.

Now about this time a young man of good family named Gotama did leave his home, and devote himself to the search for truth as a wandering ascetic. After years of penance and struggle he found what he believed to be the secret of life. He went forth to preach it, and disciples gathered round him. By and by he formed them into a simple Union or Order, and then sent them out two and two to preach and make disciples as he did himself. Year after year he laboured; his followers multiplied and spread; the Order grew; till at last old age and infirmity came on him, and he died.

Later generations gathered up the traditions of his words and deeds. The theory of the Buddha was applied to him. How much of it he appropriated to himself we do not know. But his Order unquestionably regarded him as fulfilling the conditions laid down in the sacred books. Story after story in the collection of the discourses which they ascribed to him, relates how some eminent Brahman, hearing of his fame, sends one or two of his own disciples to enquire if he is really the Blessed Buddha. The question is exactly

parallel to that which the Baptist, through two of his followers, puts to Jesus, 'Art *thou* he that should come, or do we look for another?' Then Gotama engages them in earnest talk, and by his wisdom convinces them that he is in truth the Enlightened One; and sometimes, ere they depart, he reveals to them the mystic marks. Under the influence of this conception there arose a legend of the way in which he had attained his knowledge. The story of his 'Great Renunciation' when he gave up home and wife and child, of his struggles in the quest for supreme enlightenment, of the inner conflict before he finally resolved to undertake the task of converting the world—all this took shape under the influence of the idea. Nor did love and reverence stop there. The Buddha, it was thought, had not been born like other men. He came down from heaven to deliver mankind from suffering and sin; conceived miraculously, he was born amid the songs of angels, and as he entered the world a great light shone, the dumb spake, the deaf heard, the blind saw, the lame walked, and the fires of the hells were quenched. On his name-day a venerable sage, like Simeon in the temple, foretold his future greatness. When he is about to enter on his career as Teacher, he must first vanquish the Tempter and drive him away impotent. He possesses perfect knowledge, and is without sin. He is endowed with miraculous powers, he gives sight to the blind, and feeds five hundred disciples at once out of a small basket of cakes prepared by an old woman for herself and her husband. Before his death (which he predicts) he passes through a kind of transfiguration, and a great earthquake testifies to the sympathy of nature when he departs.

Here is a legend which shows so many corres-

pondences with that of the prophet of Nazareth, as to have given rise to the hasty conjecture that one must have helped to shape the other. It is hardly probable that there was any mutual influence between India and Palestine. The essential features of the story of Gotama were well established centuries before the birth of Jesus, but there is no definite trace of their transmission to the West. These two great pictures of self-sacrificing love remain sublimely independent; the ideals for which they stand, in spite of many resemblances, are profoundly different; their likeness, in some outward details, is due to a common cause—the impulse of great thoughts and impassioned reverence to invest the simplicity of historic fact with the glory of creative imagination.

CHAPTER III.

MESSIAH'S CAREER.

The tendency of the Messianic idea to assume pictorial shape is seen in its fullest operation in the narratives prefixed to the accounts of the actual teaching ministry of Jesus. The First Three Evangelists all bring him to Galilee fresh from the struggle in the wilderness which followed his baptism by John. On the Jordan's bank does he receive the Spirit which endows him for his high office; in the recesses of the desert beyond does he pass through the conflict which gives him the mastery over the powers of evil, and completes his preparation for his work. In its first form, that of Mark, the story of Messiah begins here. But Matthew and Luke have yet more to tell. They carry back Messiah's origin from the hour when he became 'Son of God' by the descent of the Spirit, to the Virgin-birth at Bethlehem; and thus present a spiritual relation as a physical event. What traces do these stories show of the influence of popular conceptions? Must we accept them as historical, or may we find in them the utterances of faith and love set free from the restraints of historical reality, and expressing feeling rather than recording fact?

§ 1. The Birth Stories.

According to the Synoptic narratives, the fellow-townsmen of Jesus were in no doubt about his family: 'Is not this the carpenter's son?' they cried, 'Is not his mother called Mary?' *Matt.* xiii. 55, cp. *Mark* vi. 3, *Luke* iv. 22. But Matthew and Luke ascribe to him a more august parentage. In the language of the Apostles' Creed, he was 'Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary.' Does a comparison of the narratives confirm this faith?

(1) Readers of the Gospels will doubtless agree with Dr. Westcott that 'each picture is drawn with perfect independence'; can we also concur with his view that 'the separate details are exactly capable of harmonious adjustment'? Let us first examine three points which they have in common; they both represent Jesus as sprung from the ancient line of David, as born of a Virgin, and as entering the world at Bethlehem.

(*a*) It has been already remarked that the Messiah was expected to be a descendant of David, and that Jesus was again and again greeted as his 'Son.' The popular cry, however, can hardly be regarded as conclusive evidence of his ancestry; it has an official, not a historical meaning. There is no recognition of it among the members of the synagogue at Nazareth. Jesus never employs it himself, and in his colloquy with the Pharisees at Jerusalem his argument is directed against the supposed necessity that the Messiah must come from the royal line.[1] It was, however, undoubtedly believed by the early Church. Our first witness, the Apostle Paul,

[1] Comp. chap. ii. § 2, 2*a*, p. 68.

describes Jesus as 'born of the seed of David according to the flesh,' *Rom.* i. 2, and in the discourses in the Book of Acts it is emphasised both by Peter and by Paul, ii. 30, xiii. 23. Had Paul really enquired into the Master's lineage, and satisfied himself of the justice of the Church's faith? There were doubtless cases in which the claim was acknowledged by contemporary judgment. The famous Teacher, Hillel, who had come to Jerusalem from Babylonia, belonged by general consent to the royal house; and so, a little later, did Gamaliel, while the genealogies of the priests were carefully scrutinised by a special tribunal which held its sittings in the 'Square Hall' at Jerusalem. But it does not appear that any particular attention was paid to the ancestry of the ordinary layman, though Paul knew that he belonged to the tribe of Benjamin; and it seems on the whole more likely that the belief in the Davidic descent of Jesus arose out of the conviction that he was the Messiah, than that the popular greeting was founded on any examination of his family pedigree.

(*b*) At any rate the genealogies supplied in our First and Third Gospels must rather be taken as attempts to give literary form to this belief than as actual justifications of it. They cannot be reconciled by any ingenuity. It is of small consequence that Matthew is satisfied with tracing the line to Abraham, on whom the promise of royal descendants was first conferred, and thus connects Messiah with the father of the chosen people, while Luke, with a longer reach, carries up his origin to the first man, Adam, the Son of God. Nor need any stress be laid now on the rhythmic division into three groups of fourteen each which marks the arrangement of Matthew,

the series of kings from David to the Captivity being crushed into this number by the unexpected suppression of four steps (three in ver. 8, and one in ver. 11). It must suffice to observe that both lines in Matthew and Luke are traced through Joseph, and that Joseph has different fathers, Jacob in Matthew, and Eli in Luke. It has been, indeed, suggested that this was a case of the ancient custom known as the Levirate, by which the brother of a childless man was required in case of his death to marry the widow and 'raise up seed to his brother.' Joseph might have been the real child of Eli, and have been reckoned as the son of Jacob, or *vice versa*. But in that case Eli and Jacob must have been brothers, that is, they must have descended from the same father, but at this point Matthew and Luke diverge again. The same difficulty recurs again higher up, where Shealtiel, the father of Zerubbabel, is derived by Matthew from Jechoniah, and by Luke from Neri. The harmonists of the early Church supposed that here were two cases of half-brotherhood, where the custom of the Levirate had been put into operation. There is no evidence, however, that this usage ever prevailed among sons of the same mother but of different fathers. The reader who also observes that between Joseph and Zerubbabel Matthew reckons nine and Luke eighteen steps, while Matthew counts only twenty-five between Joseph and David against Luke's forty, will see that he has before him two independent attempts to give genealogical expression to the fath that Jesus, as Messiah, must by his lineage have justified the nation's hope.

(*c*) The genealogies which seek to connect Jesus with David through Joseph are, further, incompatible with the

story of his miraculous birth from Mary. The Third Evangelist displays an uneasy consciousness of this by inserting the curious words 'as was supposed' into his statement that Jesus was the son of Joseph, *Luke* iii. 23. In ii. 5 an early reading preserved in the Sinaitic-Syrian text (discovered by Mrs. Lewis in 1892) describes Mary as 'his wife.' And the same authority concludes the genealogy in *Matt.* i. 16 with the statement :—

> Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the Virgin, begat Jesus who is called the Christ.

Further evidence was supplied by Mr. F. C. Conybeare in 1898 that the genealogy of Matthew originally ended 'And Joseph begat Jesus who is called Christ.' And as the pedigrees cannot be reconciled with the birth-stories, so neither can the two birth-stories be brought into accord together. Luke relates the solemn Annunciation of her high destiny to the virgin as yet unmarried; it is immediately followed by Mary's visit to Elizabeth in Judæa, where Elizabeth salutes her as the mother of the Lord, and the virgin's joy breaks forth in glorious song. How could all this have remained unknown to Joseph? Yet in Matthew when he discovers that she is with child, his suspicion is excited, and he only consents to receive her as his wife after an angel has explained the matter to him in a dream.

(*d*) The two narratives meet, however, at Bethlehem, where the Christ is born. Yet even here, once more, their harmony is reached by different ways. The narrative of Matthew implies that Bethlehem was Joseph's home, where he lived in his own house (ii. 1, 11). Not till afterwards does he go and dwell in Nazareth (ii. 23), his settlement there being expressly designed to fulfil a

prophecy which cannot be verified.[1] Luke, on the other hand, represents Joseph and Mary as dwelling in Nazareth from the first; their presence in Bethlehem being due to special circumstances. As soon as the forty days of purification are over, the babe is presented in the temple, and the parents, having discharged all the demands of the law, 'return into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth' (ii. 39). Where, then, are the Magi, the flight into Egypt, the massacre of the children at Bethlehem, which form such striking incidents in Matthew's story? The calculation of Herod, founded on the dates supplied by the Wise Men, shows that a much longer time must have elapsed at Bethlehem than Luke's account would allow, for the King in order to make himself safe, destroys all children 'from two years old and under,' *Matt.* ii. 16. And if Joseph and Mary carried their babe back peacefully from the temple to their home at Nazareth, how is this 'detail' to be 'harmoniously adjusted' with Matthew's statement that they took him by night into Egypt and remained there till Herod's death? Must it not rather be admitted, with modern apologists like Meyer and Weiss, that the two narratives run on different lines, and cannot be forced into any real accord?

(2) If they cannot be received together, can either of them establish any special claim to preference? Each will be found to be embarrassed by peculiar difficulties of its own. Let us consider Matthew's story first.

(*a*) Its general character has the air of legend rather than of fact. The frequent occurrence of dream-warnings is of itself sufficient evidence that the narrator stands far off from the event. He uses for his agency

[1] See below, 4*e*, p. 108.

the Old Testament figure of 'the Angel of the Lord' (i. 20, ii. 13, 19); and the communications are not reserved for Joseph only, they visit the Magi as well. There is, indeed, a certain ambiguity about them: for the instruction to return to the land of Israel (ii. 20) only brings the child back into the very danger from which he had been rescued, and another intimation is needed (ii. 22) to send him into safety at Nazareth.

(*b*) Perplexities of another kind gather round the arrival of the Magi and the appearance of the star in the East. Their questions at Jerusalem rouse an excitement which reaches Herod's ears, though it would seem that the angels' song at Bethlehem, and the language of Simeon and Anna in the Temple, had made no stir. Whence the Wise Men came, the story does not tell us, nor are we informed how they knew that the wondrous star heralded 'the King of the Jews.' Some modern apologists have followed the great astronomer Kepler in his efforts to identify this portent with a 'conjunction' of the three planets, Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars, in the year 7 or 6 B.C., which would have been seen at Jerusalem. But this 'conjunction' has plainly no resemblance to Matthew's star, which does not seem to have been visible on the Wise Men's journey to the Holy City, but on their four miles' walk to Bethlehem once more appears[1] and goes before them, till it stands over the house which protects the infant king. The brilliant star noted by the

[1] The words 'lo, the star which they saw in the east,' *Matt.* ii. 9, imply that they had not seen it on the way to Jerusalem. Had it guided them all the way, it could as well have led them to Bethlehem without the necessity of making enquiries in the Holy City.

Chinese chronolgers in a period corresponding in our reckoning to the year 4 B.C. equally fails to fulfil the Gospel conditions. And it is not clear why the star should not have done its work at once, and brought the Magi to their goal direct. Then Herod would have known nothing more of them than he knew of the heavenly host, or of Simeon's prophecies: and the babes in David's city would have been unharmed. History has, in truth, crimes enough to lay at Herod's door; but of the slaughter of the Innocents it says not one word. In this, at least, his memory is clear.

(3) The narrative of Luke is in hardly less violent conflict with physical and historic fact.

(*a*) Here, likewise, the peculiar style alike of incident and story at once arouses the attention even while it charms the soul. The visit of the angel to Mary, which Art has loved so often to portray, who does not see that it is the symbol of an idea, not the record of an event! The incident, it is averred, did not become known till long time had elapsed. The Mother of Jesus kept her secret till her death. We must not read the gospel-words as a dry report of a conversation between the Virgin and her heavenly visitor; it is a literary attempt, when she herself has passed away, to delineate what must have been the moment of her most solemn experience. When this explanation is seriously offered by believers in the miraculous conception,[1] it is plain that the narrative

[1] Weiss, *Life of Christ*, vol. i. pp. 223, 227.—From another point of view it has been suggested that the passage in i. 34-35, which is the only reference to the Virgin-birth in the Third Gospel, may possibly be an addition to the original story. See *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, page 487.

itself contains no compelling evidence of its own truth. The affinities to Old Testament language are specially numerous and striking in the hymns assigned to Mary, to Zechariah, and to Simeon; while the manifestation of the glory of the Lord, and the praises chanted by the heavenly host, belong to the sphere of religious imagination, not to the earth and sky of common life.

(*b*) The enrolment which gives occasion to the journey of Joseph and Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem, cannot be fitted either into imperial usage, or into secular history. Such enrolment was for purposes of taxation; and it is said to have embraced 'all the world.' Three times did Augustus impose a general taxation, not, indeed, upon all the provinces of the Empire, but upon all Roman citizens, in the years 26 and 6 B.C., and 14 A.D. The first of these occasions is too early, and the last too late. On the second, while Herod was still alive, Judæa and Galilee were not under Roman jurisdiction for such purposes at all; and even after Herod's death, Judæa still remained for some years outside the circle of imperial administration until the deposition of his son Archelaus in A.D. 6. Moreover, the Roman census was always taken at the citizen's own residence. It has been pleaded that the arrangement which sent Joseph to Bethlehem was a concession to Jewish ideas. But how was it possible to every householder to betake himself to the birthplace of an ancestor a thousand years before? 'Everyone,' we are told, 'went to his own city.' The whole population is set in motion, in order to get Mary to Bethlehem. And the device does not even then secure its end; for the law did not require the registration of the citizen's wife, still less of his betrothed. If we accept

the judgment of the profoundest of modern students of imperial Rome, the historian Mommsen, the enrolment, as Luke describes it, was an impossibility.[1]

(*c*) While the circumstances do not accord with the political or legal conditions, so neither can the time be fitted into the chronology. The Evangelist gives us a date, which is thus rendered in the Revised Version, *Luke* ii. 2 :—

> This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

Now it is known from secular history that Quirinius was governor of Syria, and did conduct a census for taxation, though the measure was not part of an imperial scheme. It was this which roused the rebellion of Judas mentioned in *Acts* v. 37. But this did not take place till after the death of Herod and the deposition of Archelaus ; and as the latter event belongs to the year 6 A.D. it cannot be set earlier than A.D. 7. The gospel phrase, however, 'the first enrolment,' implies that more than one such census was carried out by Quirinius ; and it has been suggested that he filled the office of governor *twice*, and that the incident of Luke occurred in his previous term. Of this there is, indeed, no positive proof ; but an imperfect inscription found at Tivoli in the year 1764 has been supposed to confirm it. The inscription, however, contains no name, and historians have debated to whom it refers. High authorities are ranged on different sides,

[1] The difficulties above stated are in no way mitigated by the ingenious combinations of Prof. Ramsay, founded on the papyri discovered in Egypt by Messrs. Grenfell, Kenyon, and others. For a sketch of his argument in *Was Christ born at Bethlehem?* see *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 484-6.

A. W. Zumpt, for instance, believing that it commemorated Sentius Saturninus, who is expressly stated by Tertullian to have been governor of Syria at the birth of Jesus, while Mommsen argues that it applied to Quirinius. It certainly does relate to some one who was twice connected with the administration of Syria. But it depends on some missing words whether this officer served twice as 'Governor,' as Mommsen supposes, or whether on the first occasion he filled some other post. The historian Tacitus mentions that Quirinius gained a victory over some Cilician tribes 'soon after' he had held the consulate (in B.C. 12). It is conjectured that this was among the services for which the triumph specified in the inscription was decreed to the unknown hero, as the eastern part of Cilicia was attached to the province of Syria. In spite of all these ingenious adjustments, however, the learned and orthodox Meyer remained unconvinced of a two-fold governorship of Quirinius in Syria, and freely surrendered Luke's statement as 'manifestly incorrect,' though he thought that 'something of the nature of a census must have taken place.'[1] Mommsen, on the other hand, while regarding the earlier governorship as 'clearly proved,' affirms that no one cognizant of the facts can believe that any census was carried out by the Romans at that time, 'whatever theologians, or those who, like theologians, talk in bonds, may have persuaded themselves or others': on the contrary, it must be admitted that Luke blended truth with error.[2] Where each element in Luke's statement is thus alter-

[1] Commentary on *Luke* ii. 2, p. 322-3.

[2] *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*. Berolini, 1883, pp. 163, 176.

nately declared unsound, it is impossible to place much confidence in their joint combination. The third Evangelist seeks to connect the advent of the Prince of Peace with some act of the imperial power which the new-born King was destined to overthrow. He emphasizes at the outset the contrast between the Cæsar and the Christ; as his thought passes from the splendour of the palace at Rome where decrees are issued affecting 'all the world' to the lowly manger at Bethlehem, he combines items of scattered reminiscence into one whole, and it is not surprising if they do not always fit.

(4) If, however, the details of the birth-stories cannot be verified by comparison either with each other, or with science and history, can we in any way account for them poetically? Can we discover the ideas and emotions which lie behind them and play through them? Some points at least may be discerned through the radiant haze of emotion encompassing the infancy of the Christ, round which pious imagination gathered with special force.

(*a*) As 'Son of David,' Messiah must have been born in Bethlehem. Prophecy demanded it, as Matthew's story shows us; when Herod enquired of the chief priests and scribes where he would enter the world, they were ready with their answer from *Micah* v. 2:—

> And thou Bethlehem, land of Judah,
> Art in no wise least amongst the princes of Judah:
> For out of thee shall come forth a governor,
> Which shall be shepherd of my people Israel.[1]

The Rabbis did not trouble themselves with the circumstance that the prophet had in view the events of his own

[1] The reader will note that the text as quoted in *Matt.* ii. 6 does not altogether agree with the passage in the original.

time;[1] let Assyria marshal her invading hosts, the deliverer would arise to throw off the foreign yoke, and a succession of princes should establish Judah's power, v. 5 :—

> And this man shall be Peace.
> When the Assyrian shall come into our land,
> And when he shall tread in our palaces,
> Then shall we raise against him seven shepherds,
> And eight princes among men.

The interpretation of the synagogue passed into the Church, and Christian thought inherited the expectations which sprang out of their common past. How powerfully the Messianic hope attached itself to the birth of Jesus may be seen in the hymns which celebrate it. 'He hath holpen Israel his servant,' cried Mary, after the salutation of Elizabeth, 'that he might remember mercy towards Abraham and his seed for ever.' 'Redemption for his people,' and 'a horn of salvation in the house of his servant David,' are the theme of Zachariah's song when his tongue is at last unloosed. Simeon was looking for 'the consolation of Israel'; the devout Anna announced the appearance of the Saviour to 'all them that were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.' Everything, therefore, pointed to Bethlehem as the place of the birth of Jesus. Luke's story, starting from the known historic fact that Nazareth was the home of his father and mother, has to provide an occasion for getting them to the city of David. Matthew's narrative, on the other hand, assumes that Messiah's parents dwelt in the abode of his royal ancestry, and then devises means for changing their residence to Nazareth.

[1] The latter part of the eighth century, B.C.

(*b*) The idea of Messiah as 'Son of God,' signalised by Mark in the story of the Baptism, is carried back by the narratives of Matthew and Luke to his very birth. The first 'Son of God,' Adam (according to Luke), had appeared upon the scene fresh from his Maker's hand; the second, though 'born of a woman,' as the Apostle Paul says, *Gal.* iv. 4, must have owed his origin to direct divine intervention. The Hebrew Scriptures loved to tell of Isaac and Samuel, born wondrously to the old: marvels gathered likewise round the birth of ancient heroes like Gideon and Samson. That the ideas thus suggested tended to connect themselves with Messiah, is clear from such parallels as the following:—

Judges vi. 12.	*Luke* i. 28.
And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said unto him, *The Lord is with thee*, thou mighty man of valour.	And he [the angel Gabriel] came in unto her and said, Hail, thou that are highly favoured, *the Lord is with thee.*
Judges xiii. 3, cp. 5.	*Luke* i. 30, 31.
And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman and *said unto her*, *Behold* now, thou art barren and bearest not, but *thou shall conceive and bear a son.*	*And the angel said unto her*, Fear not Mary, for thou hast found favour with God. And *behold*, *thou shalt conceive* in thy womb *and bear a son.*

When it is added that 'he shall be called the Son of the Most High,' we hear the echo of the prophetic promise concerning David's offspring, 'I will be his father, and he shall be my son,' *2 Sam.* vii. 14; the gift of 'the throne of his father David,' so that 'of his kingdom there shall be

no end,' does but realise the hopes of ancient time,—'I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever,' *2 Sam.* vii. 13; 'of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom,' *Isaiah* ix. 7. The Holy Spirit which is to come upon Mary is the same heavenly agency which rested on the prophets, dwelt in the consecrated nation, and descended on Messiah in the moment of divine appointment to his high function, *Mark* i. 10, 11. That Messiah's mother should be yet maiden, does not, indeed, seem to have been part of the current hope. But the tendency to lift the great and noble above the range of ordinary men worked even within Judaism itself, for Talmudic legend (of unknown date it is true) ascribed virginity to the mother of Moses; and the Greek translation of the passage in *Isaiah* vii. 14, which Matthew follows, contained the very word which the Church wanted. As with the passage from Micah, a promise referring to an immediate event—the deliverance of Ahaz and his people from the invasion of the allied kings Rezin and Pekah—is detached from its context, and converted into a prediction of Messiah's birth. The Hebrew term, which simply means 'young woman,' was rendered in the Greek version of the Scriptures (which the Church chiefly used) 'the virgin'; and Matthew reveals the purport of his narrative by the remark, 'Now all this is come to pass, *that it might be fulfilled* which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet.' The incidents of the story had been ready waiting more than seven hundred years: as soon as Messiah appeared, they must have happened.

(*c*) The relation of Messiah to different classes of the people, and to the wider circle of the nations of the world,

seems to be reflected in the personages who gather round the babe. The misery and distress of antiquity arose largely from oppressive misgovernment, from shameless injustice, and the tyranny of the rich over the poor. The ideal king was to redress all wrongs and judge the poor with righteousness. The *Magnificat* accordingly anticipates vast social changes, when princes shall be put down from their thrones, and those of low degree exalted. So it is to the simple shepherds that the angel host make known Messiah's birth; and they find the babe lying in a manger. The promise is of help to the suffering, of comfort to the poor. And to the Gentiles, whom ancient hope had embraced in one community of religion with Israel, Messiah comes as 'a light for revelation,' *Luke* ii. 32. The imagination which had from the earliest days discerned in light a symbol first of the actual presence of Deity, and then of what we call religious truth, finds still more concrete expression in Matthew's narrative. Light shone over Galilee in olden time, when the wonderful child for whom Isaiah hoped, was near, *Is.* ix. 1, 2. Light should shine over the new Jerusalem when it rose from desolation and ruin, as the nations flocked to it with their gifts, and found in it the altar for the world, *Is.* lx. 1-7. So to Messiah's feet did the Magi, representative of Gentile wealth and learning, come, guided by a heavenly light which at length rested over him; and they brought the very gifts of gold and frankincense which the prophet had foretold, *Matt.* ii. 11, *Is.* lx. 6. That the light, instead of being vaguely diffused, took the concentrated form of a star, was probably suggested by the ancient words attributed to Balaam, which Jewish hope had long applied to Messiah, *Numbers* xxiv. 17:—

I see him, but not now:
I behold him, but not nigh:
There shall come forth a star out of Jacob,
And a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.

(*d*) Among the elements peculiar to Matthew's narrative is the story of Herod's futile attempt to rid himself of one who might become a dangerous rival. It is the beginning of the struggle between the power of the world and the power that is of God. In the picturesque imagery of *Revelation*, xii. 1-6, when the idealised Israel-mother, crowned with twelve stars, gives birth to Messiah, a great red dragon stands before her, ready to devour her offspring. But the man child, 'who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron,' is caught away to God, and the woman flees to a shelter in the wilderness. The idea is the same; only the presentment of it differs.[1] But it was not a new one. Had not Moses, who serves so often as Messiah's counterpart, been in like peril? The hints supplied in the book of Exodus had been worked out into fuller detail in the Jewish schools; where the question 'Why did Pharaoh order that the Israelite male children should be cast into the Nile?' received the following answer:—

While the affairs of the Hebrews were in this condition, the following reason made the Egyptians more solicitous for the extinction of our nation. One of those sacred Scribes, who are very sagacious in foretelling future events truly, told the king that about this time there would be a child born to the Israelites; who if he were reared, would bring the Egyptian dominion low, and would raise the Israelites; that he would excel all men in virtue, and obtain a glory that would be remembered through all ages.

[1] This passage appears to belong to the Jewish and older part of the Revelation.

Which thing was so feared by the king, that at this Scribe's suggestion he commanded that they should cast every male child which was born to the Israelites into the river, and destroy it.[1]

Jewish imagination, therefore, accounted for Pharaoh's order by supposing that it was directed to secure the death of the predicted deliverer. But as Josephus remarks, 'No one can prevail over the purpose of God,' and Moses and Messiah were alike preserved.[2] That reminiscence of the ancient story has found its way into Matthew's narrative, may be seen from the coincidence in the phrases describing the return of Moses to Egypt, after his flight in consequence of the death of the Egyptian, and the return of Joseph with Jesus into Palestine.

Exodus iv. 19, 23.

And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt; *for* all the men *are dead which sought* thy *life*. And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt.

Matt. ii. 19-21.

But when Herod was dead, behold an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; *for* they *are dead that sought* the young child's *life*. And he arose and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

(*e*) A further element in these stories, especially in Matthew's, has been already named, the fulfilment of

[1] Josephus, *Antiquities*, ii. 9, 2.

[2] Compare the story of King Bimbisāra, Beal, *Romantic History of Buddha*, p. 103-4, and note the different close due to Buddhist ethical conceptions.

prophecy. This it was which determined Messiah's birth in Bethlehem; this brought the Magi thither with their gifts under the guidance of the star. This, too, has its part in the massacre at Bethlehem, *Matt.* ii. 17, 18; and this settled the question of the place of Joseph's flight. For had not the prophet Hosea said 'Out of Egypt did I call my son'? It is true that the same passage showed, *Hos.* xi. 1, that the son was Israel, and that the summons was made at the Exodus. But the Rabbinical method of treating the Scriptures, which passed into the Church, was not limited by the original sense; it seized on any passage which seemed expressive, and drew from it the meaning it required. The selection of Nazareth as the future home of the Messiah was designed in like manner 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, that he should be called a Nazarene.' No such utterance can now be found in any prophetic oracle —still less (as the plural form implies) in more than one. It is perhaps in part suggested by the account of Samson who was to be a 'Nazirite,' and to 'save' Israel, as Jesus was to 'save' his people from their sins; and it has been thought to contain an echo of the promise that a 'Nézer,' or 'shoot,' should come forth out of the stock of Jesse, *Is.* xi. 1. But these remote allusions are vague and unsatisfactory: yet the difficulty of explaining the phrase shows with what eagerness the Evangelist sought the most distant confirmation of his story in the one source of authority which he recognized, viz., prophecy.

(5) Our inability to ascertain precisely the conditions under which the narratives of Messiah's birth arose, need not deter us from forming a judgment as to their poetical

and imaginative character. It is plain that their authors were saturated with the language of the Old Testament, both Hebrew and Greek.[1] It might be supposed that they would have arisen more easily upon Gentile ground, yet their clear roots in the ideas and phrases of the Scriptures rather suggest Jewish sources. On the other hand, the extreme Jewish section of the Church, the Ebionites, rejected them; and a curious piece of linguistic evidence implies that the theory of the miraculous conception originated among those who spoke Greek rather than Aramean. In Hebrew the word for Spirit, *rûach*, is feminine: and in the Gospel of the Hebrews, accordingly, Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as his *mother*. On the soil of Palestine, therefore, the doctrine of the miraculous conception did not flourish. Certainly these opening stories presented fewer stumbling-blocks to Gentile readers, and Justin the Martyr does not hesitate to compare the divine origin of Perseus with the virgin-birth of Christ; the achievements of Æsculapius who healed the sick and raised the dead, with the Gospel miracles; and the rise of Bellerophon into the sky with the ascension. Apart, however, from these parallels in classical mythology which a Christian teacher of the second century did not disdain to quote, there are other cases where similar poetic growths may be observed, within a period of time even shorter than that between the career of Jesus and the Gospel records. The lives of the saints are so obviously influenced by Christian

[1] Every reader of the first two chapters of S. Luke's Gospel will have observed the constant recurrence of Old Testament phraseology which gives a special character to the opening of the book.

story that it will be better to present examples whose independence cannot be denied.

(*a*) The philosopher Plato lived in the full blaze of Athenian glory, in the most brilliant era of the Greek thought and art which still exert so deep an influence over cultivated minds. He died, above eighty years of age, surrounded by friends and disciples, leaving his nephew Speusippus to succeed him as president of the Academy. Yet his biographers were not certain whether he was born at Athens or in the island of Ægina, and even his parentage was not decided. He passed, indeed, for the son of Ariston and Perictionê. But Diogenes Laertius, in his Lives of the Philosophers, quoting from the funeral discourse pronounced by Speusippus upon his uncle, and from two other authorities, mentions the report current in Athens that the philosopher was of more than mortal birth. Immediately upon his marriage, Ariston was warned by Apollo in a dream that the son whom Perictionê would bear was his. This story was handed on by Plato's own nephew in the eulogium delivered on his death. Even within his own life-time, then, among his fellow-citizens, in the streets and groves he daily trod, enthusiastic affection declared him the offspring of a god.

(*b*) On the throne of Rome such adulation seems in one sense less astonishing; yet whence came, it may be asked, the stories which gathered round Caesar Augustus? In the life which his freedman Julius Marathus wrote of his imperial master, it was related that a few months before his birth a prodigy occurred publicly at Rome, by which it was foretold that Nature would bring forth a king for the Roman people. The terrified Senate, goaded by the fear which had impelled a Pharaoh and

was to incite a Herod, passed a decree ordering the death of every child born that year; Marathus having to explain as best he could how the decree was not laid up in the archives. Another writer named Asclepiades, who had no connection with Augustus himself, and belonged to a generation after him, affirmed in a treatise entitled 'Thelogumena,' concerned apparently with comparative mythology, that the future Emperor's mother had conceived him miraculously in the temple of Apollo, so that the first Caesar was the son of a god. It is not to be supposed that Asclepiades, who lived in Egypt, himself invented the tale. He gathered it into his collection; had the rest of his materials come down to us, we might have possessed still further illustrations of the rapidity with which reverence or flattery could clothe itself in mythologic form.[1]

(*c*) A more remarkable parallel meets us in the legend of the Buddha. The general similarity of the expectation of the 'Great Man' to that of the Messiah has been already pointed out.[2] It is noteworthy also that some of the details which gathered round the birth of the Buddha resemble incidents in the infancy of the Christ. When

[1] It may be added that inscriptions at Tarsus, in the isle of Cos, and elsewhere, and papyri recently dug up in the Taygûm in Egypt, show that Augustus took the title 'son of god' (Greek θεοῦ υἱός, Latin *divi filius*). This no doubt referred to the translation of his father by adoption into the ranks of the exalted spirits above. But it also shows how many shades of meaning such an epithet might imply; and how the general use of the term in a wider sense might make application to a particular person more easy for Gentile believers.

[2] See chap. ii. § 3, 3, p

the future Buddha made himself incarnate in his mother's womb, an immeasurable light appeared throughout the world. The reign of peace began :—

> The blind received their sight; the deaf heard; the dumb spake; the crooked became straight; the lame walked; all prisoners were freed from their bonds; in each hell the fire was extinguished; the wild animals ceased to be afraid; the illness of the sick was allayed; all men began to speak kindly.[1]

On the day when the wondrous child was born, the angel host rejoiced, saying,

> In Kapilavastu, to Suddhodana the king, a son is born, who, seated under the Bo-tree, will become a Buddha, and will found a kingdom of righteousness.

An aged ascetic, hearing the angels' song, entered the palace and asked to see the boy. Perceiving that he would most certainly become a Buddha, he smiled; but he could not, like Simeon, sing his *Nunc dimittis*; as he reflected that he would have passed into another world before the child would have gained the fulness of enlightenment, so that he could not be taught by him, he wept. Four days later, the ceremony of choosing the boy's name was performed. The Brahmans were gathered in the palace; eight of them knew the mystic marks of the 'Great Man'; and the youngest of them, beholding their perfection on the babe presented to him, declared 'Verily, he will become a Buddha, and remove the veils 'of sin and ignorance from the world.'

Here are again some of the familiar traits. The Buddha is the founder of a kingdom of righteousness,

[1] *Buddhist Birth Stories*, translated by T. W. Rhys Davids, vol. i., p. 64 (a few words have been left out).

where love and truth shall reign throughout the world. He is miraculously conceived; his advent is heralded by a burst of light;[1] peace and goodwill prevail, not among men, only, but among beasts as well; angels celebrate his birth: and sages prophetically discern his future greatness, and declare that he will save men from their sins. In the social conditions of the valley of the Ganges, the absence of national enmities and the rival claims of race, there was no place for that national motive which plays so large a part in the Hebrew hope. But the moral elements in the two great ideal figures of the Buddha and the Christ have many traits in common. It is not surprising, therefore, that poetic imagination clothed them in similar forms.

§ 2. The Baptism.

The stories of the Birth of Jesus represent a later stage of reflection on his person and origin than the narratives of his Baptism. But these have in like manner received their present shape under the influence of the Messianic conception. A rapid examination of them will perhaps make this clear.

(1) No marked differences exist between these brief accounts such as render the descriptions of the Infancy

[1] In the later Chinese version the marvellous light shines again at his birth. Its symbolic meaning was perfectly well understood, for it is observed 'now this miraculous light is one of the signs of the Buddha's future conquest over the powers of darkness and sin.' And again, 'The light which appeared at his birth, refers to the excellency of his doctrine.' Beal, *Romantic History of Buddha*, pp. 43, 45.

in Matthew and Luke incapable of mutual adjustment. But when they are set side by side, more delicate variations may be observed, which are assuredly not without their hidden cause.

Mark i. 9-11

And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon[1] him; and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

Luke iii, 21-22.

Now it came to pass when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also having been baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form, as a dove, upon him; and a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

Matt. iii. 13, 16, 17.

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water; and lo the heavens were opened,[2] and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Among these different renderings of the same event, Mark's, it will be seen, is the simplest, and it may, therefore, be provisionally placed first. It describes the endowment of Jesus as Messiah, with the Spirit which should qualify him for the high office. Ancient prophecy had declared that on the hero-king should rest the sevenfold spirit of Yahweh, *Is.* xi. 2-3; and the same heavenly power fitted the 'Servant' of his choice

[1] Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf, Nestle, B. Weiss, and others, read *into*.

[2] Omit 'unto him,' with the margin, and Westcott and Hort.

to carry the true religion to the nations, *Is.* xlii. 1.[1] Mark, accordingly, presents Jesus as Messianically equipped at his baptism. That is the moment when he sees the heavens opened and he receives the Spirit. By these symbols, it is plain, the Evangelist describes an inward experience, not an outward event. For Ezekiel also, by the river Chebar, this was the beginning of his 'visions of God,' *Ezek.* i. 1. Abundant symbolism gathered round the dove both in Jewish and Gentile imagination. It appears as a sacred emblem on the head of deity in Syria or Phœnicia. Jesus himself uses it as a type of innocence. Philo finds in it an emblem of the heavenly Word; it is the bird of Wisdom, the possession of God. The voice that follows speaks to Jesus only, in language founded on the royal psalm, 'Thou art my Son,' *Ps.* ii. 7, and the commission given to the anointed servant, 'my chosen, in whom my soul delighteth,' *Is.* xlii. 1. This, then, according to Mark, is the true birth-hour of Jesus as Messiah, the moment of God's election, and his own self-consecration to the heavenly cause. But to Luke and Matthew, who have already described his endowment with the Spirit through his conception, and have carried back his Messianic character to his nativity, this view of the baptism is not possible. 'Son of God' by nature, he needs no divine adoption; he is already what Mark represents him as becoming; and though the genealogies which assign to him a human origin, would be naturally followed by the dedication on the Jordan's bank, yet the stories of the wondrous birth are not. Accordingly by slight touches

[1] On these two different elements in the Messianic ideal, see chap. ii. § 2, 2, *a*, *f*, pp. 67 79

the older presentation of a private and personal sanctification is converted into a public attestation of his office. In Luke's narrative the opened heavens are not for Jesus only; the Spirit comes down 'in a bodily form,' and is therefore visible to all the people. Matthew here seems to endeavour to combine the two, employing Luke's phrase 'the heavens were opened' with Mark's 'he saw the Spirit descending as a dove.'[1] But he leaves no doubt of the external character of the incident, for a bold change transforms the heavenly utterance into an address not to Jesus but to the witnesses around, 'This is my beloved Son.'

(2) A further comparison of these narratives of the baptism with those of other gospels will show in what various forms the early Church expressed the thought that this was the real beginning of the career of Jesus as Messiah. Quoting from the 'Memoirs' Justin reports the words of the voice in actual coincidence with *Psalm* ii. 7:—

> Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee:

a variant which occurs in an early manuscript of *Luke* iii. 22. The Ebionite Gospel placed this by the side of the form now in Mark and Luke, adding that the dove entered into Jesus. The Gospel of the Nazarenes told the story thus:—

> It came to pass when the Lord came up out of the water, that the whole fountain of the holy Spirit descended, rested over him

[1] Later harmonists sought to complete this by adding the words 'unto him.' For further evidence of Matthew's method of occasional compilation, e.g. in the description of John the Baptist, see chap. vii., § 3, 3.

and said, My Son, in all the prophets I awaited thee, that thou shouldest come, and I might rest upon thee. For thou art my resting-place, thou art my first-born son, that reignest for evermore.

With this the Gospel of the Hebrews concurs, prefixing a detail which is mentioned also by Justin, that 'when Jesus was being baptised, fire appeared on the water.'

(3) One more element remains to be noted. The modifications in Matthew and Luke from the older form in Mark, are apparently due to different conceptions of the origin and nature of the Messianic function ascribed to Jesus. But it was inevitable that a further question should in due time arise. The baptism of John was a baptism of repentance; and those who submitted to it confessed their sins. If Jesus was Messiah before he came to Jordan's bank, if he were Son of God by birth and being, what need had he of such a baptism? To Mark and Luke this difficulty was not present: Mark could not feel it: to Luke, apparently, it had not occurred. The Fourth Evangelist seems to have quietly avoided it by omitting the baptism altogether. Not always, however, could it be thus escaped; and the Gospel of the Hebrews faced it bravely thus:

Behold the mother of the Lord and his brothers said to him, John the Baptist baptizeth unto remission of sins, let us go and be baptized of him. But he said to them, In what have I sinned that I should go and be baptized by him, unless this very thing which I say is ignorance.

The Gospel of the Ebionites presents us with another scene, not between Messiah and his family but be Messiah and John. After the heavenly utterance. day have I begotten thee,' the narrative continued

And straightway a great light shone round about the place. And when he saw it, John saith to him, Who art thou, Lord? And again a voice from heaven came unto him, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Then John falling down before him, saith, I entreat thee, Lord, baptise me. But he prevented him, saying, Suffer it, for thus it is fitting that all things should be fulfilled.

The Ebionite story attributes John's recognition of his Lord to the declarations of the heavenly voice. The addition in which Matthew deals with the same theme, leaves the reader in doubt how the Baptist discerned the real character of the applicant for his baptism, *Matt.* iii. 14, 15:—

Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to the Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John would have hindered him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.

In this insertion, thrust in by Matthew through the older tradition, have we not further evidence of the mode in which the Messianic idea fashioned the Gospel material to suit its needs?

§ 3. The Temptation.

The hour of Messiah's dedication was followed by the season of his severest trial. Into the secrets of that struggle, the Church sought in vain to penetrate. Conscious that no noble mind can undertake great tasks without conflict, it prefixed to the story of the Teacher's ministry a picture of Messiah's temptation, finally expanded

into a dramatic series of three acts.[1] The Messianic elements in these it is not difficult to specify.

(1) The locality was naturally the wilderness. There was the scene of the long discipline of Israel, Yahweh's 'first-born' son, whose forty years of trial set the standard of number, repeated on a smaller scale in Moses' fast of forty days upon the mount, and Elijah's journey without food to Horeb. And the wilderness was also pre-eminently the place of evil spirits. One of the tasks which awaited Messiah, according to the Jewish theologians, was to conquer Satan and overcome the demons: well might Satan take fright, as they said, at his aspect, for Messiah would cast him and all the wicked heathen into hell. This theme is presented in highly dramatic form in the Revelation: and it greets us at the outset of the Teacher's labours in Galilee, when the unclean spirit in the synagogue at Capernaum cries out, What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.' The founding of the kingdom might thus be regarded as an organized attack on the powers of evil; nor was there any hope, as Jesus

[1] The Greek word for temptation or trial, as applied to Jesus, *Mark* i. 13 and parallels, *Luke* xxii. 28, is the same word which occurs in the Lord's Prayer, 'lead us not into temptation.' The idea that the righteous must be tried or proved, was familiar to Hebrew thought. So Abraham was 'tried' or 'tempted' by Yahweh, *Gen.* xxii. 1; and with Yahweh's permission Satan similarly tests Job. Later Jewish imagination reckoned ten temptations to Abraham, and when he had been victorious in them all, 'the Lord blessed him in all things,' *Gen.* xxiv. 1. On the application of the conception of the myth to this narrative see the author's lectures on *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 245-247.

himself remarked, that the strong man's house could be entered, unless the strong man were first bound, *Mark* iii. 27. The earliest attempts, therefore, to portray Messiah's fight with sin, set him alone in the wilderness confronting Satan. True, the wild beasts were with him, symbols, perhaps, of the hostile powers of the world, but Messiah should tread on the young lion and the adder. True, the angels were not far away, but waited for the moment of victory, to offer their services and supply Messiah's needs. Neither angel nor beast, however, could make or mar Messiah's triumph, the peril and the glory were his alone. So Mark sums up the crisis with fitting brevity, i. 13 :—

> And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

(2) Reflection on Messiah's life, however, soon strove to fathom the mystery of such an experience. What kind of trials beset him? How did Satan seek to get him into his power? To ask such questions was to call forth their answers. The historical Jesus and the expected Messiah had but to be contrasted, and the key to Satan's wiles must lie in their difference. The Church owed its birth to a wandering teacher, sometimes houseless and hungry; when Messiah was famished, what more vivid illustration could be conceived of the scanty resources with which Jesus had boldly undertaken the most tremendous task? Well might the tempter call on him to show that he possessed powers adequate to his enterprize, or invite him to escape by miracle from personal want:—'If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' When Messiah does

at length feed the hungry, it is for the crowd who have hung upon his lips all day, and have thus learned that man doth not live by bread alone, that his wondrous power is exercised. That incident in the Tradition, placed like the Temptation in the wilderness, is followed by the demand of the Pharisees for a sign, by which Messiah's might should be triumphantly established. Brief as are the records, it is probable enough that Jesus was met again and again by such demands. Out of the memory of them sprang the temptation which Matthew places second, to give some public demonstration of the divine power which upheld him. Let him but fling himself from some Temple height, and descend unharmed amid the crowd below! Raised on the pinnacle of his first successes, what giddy dreams of daring venture might not have crossed his mind! But no, he will not tempt Providence by quitting the appointed way of moral endeavour. Lastly, the Church assigned to the beginning of his career, in altered form, the trial which historical remembrance placed at its most critical moment. At Cæsarea Philippi Peter, in the name of the Twelve, acknowledged him the Messiah, *Mark* viii. 29. The disciples looked for him to lead them to sovereignty; he saw that his pathway pointed to death. When Peter encouragingly rebuked him, 'this shall never be unto thee,' he turned with vehemence upon him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' adding immediately after, 'What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his soul?' The scene remained too firmly embedded in the Tradition to be disturbed. But has it not suggested the temptation, which Matthew artistically places at the climax, to grasp at worldly power, forsaking allegiance to

the only True? 'Get thee behind me, Satan,' cries Jesus to Peter, as his disciple offers him a throne instead of a cross. 'Get thee hence, Satan,' cries Messiah to the Devil, when he will not purchase empire by unfaithfulness.

(3) The symbolism of Christian story is not without parallels elsewhere; and in proportion to the moral force of the religious consciousness will be the prominence ascribed to such conflicts of legendary heroes with the powers of evil. The Greek fable of the choice of Herakles shows none of that passionate intensity which marks the brief narrative of the Evangelists. But in the records of a religion which has some striking affinities with the faith of Israel, there are traces of a struggle not wholly unlike that of Jesus with the 'Adversary.' The ancient Persians embodied their beliefs in a collection of Scriptures which have come down to us under the name of the Zend-Avesta. The central figure of these writings was known to the Greeks under the name of Zoroaster; they supposed him to have been the founder of the religion of the Magi; and some writers actually placed him as early as six thousand years before the death of Plato. It is not necessary for our purpose now to enquire whether such a teacher ever really lived. But it is worth while to point out that in his character of prophet, champion of righteousness, and revealer of the truth, he is exposed to a trial on the same line as Messiah's. Over against the supreme power of good, Ahura Mazda, 'Lord all-knowing,' stands the hostile power of evil, Angra Mainyu.[1] The appearance of

[1] These names are often known under contracted forms, Ormazd and Ahriman.

Zoroaster, at whose birth all the creatures of the good creations cried out, 'Hail!' who was the first to think good thoughts, to speak good words, and perform good deeds,[1] threatens Ahriman's sway; all his energy, therefore, is directed against his rival. Later legends related how from his birth to his thirtieth year Zoroaster was exposed to continual danger by the attacks of the demons, till his wondrous powers overcame them all, and they ceased to beset him. But in the Avesta these conflicts, though more obscurely related, strike a deeper note of moral experience. The assault, indeed, is made on one occasion against his life.

From the regions of the North[2] forth rushed Angra Mainyu, the deadly. And thus spake the guileful one, he the evil-doer, Ahriman, the deadly: 'Demons! rush down upon him! destroy the holy Zoroaster!' The demon came rushing along, the unseen death, the hell-born.

Zoroaster chanted aloud the Ahuna-Vairya:[3] 'The will of the Lord is the law of holiness, the riches of Vohumano [good thought] shall be given to him who works in this world for Mazda [the All-knowing], and wields according to the will of Ahura [the Lord] the power he gave him to relieve the poor.'

The demon dismayed rushed away, the unseen death, the hell-born. And the demon, the guileful one, said unto Ahriman: 'O baneful Ahriman! I see no way to kill him, so great is the glory of the holy Zoroaster.'[4]

Foiled in the endeavour to get Zoroaster's life into his power, Ahriman seeks to avert the impending overthrow

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, xxiii. p. 201-2.

[2] Probably, that is, from hell.

[3] A sacred prayer by which Ormazd himself in his first conflict with Ahriman had beaten him back.

[4] Zenda-Avesta, pt. I, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. iv. p. 204.

of his own sovereignty of evil by offering his antagonist the glory of imperial sway.

> Again to him said the guileful one, the maker of the evil world, Ahriman: 'Do not destroy my creatures, O holy Zoroaster. Renounce the good laws of the worshippers of Mazda, and thou shalt gain such a boon as Zohâk[1] gained, the ruler of the nations.'
>
> Thus in answer to him said Zoroaster: 'No! never will I renounce the good law of the worshippers of Mazda, though my body, my life, my soul, should burst.'

Finally when Ahriman enquires by whose word he will strike and repel, Zoroaster replies, 'The word taught by Mazda, these are my weapons, my best weapons!' And after chanting once more the sacred prayer, he exclaims, 'This I ask thee: teach me the truth, O Lord!'[2] Here are substantially the same elements as in the Gospel story; the effort of the tempter to beguile the holy prophet from his task by offering to set him on a throne is baffled through his reliance on the 'words taught by the All-knowing,' just as Jesus overcomes Satan with a thrice repeated 'It is written.'

(4) The Zend-Avesta does not connect the assault of Ahriman with any special crisis in Zoroaster's life. But the reflective imagination which places the Temptation of Jesus immediately after his investiture with Messianic dignity, finds a counterpart in the Buddhist Scriptures in the conflict between Gotama and the Evil One as soon as he had attained supreme Enlightenment. On the night when the young Prince made the 'Great Renunciation,'

[1] A legendary king who was said to have ruled the world a thousand years.

[2] *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. iv. p. 206.

leaving wife and child and home, to devote himself to the quest of truth for the sake of his fellow-men, Mara, the Indian Satan, appeared at the city gate with the offer of world-wide rule[1]:—

Standing in the air he exclaimed, 'Depart not, O my Lord! In seven days from now the wheel of empire will appear, and will make you sovereign over the four continents and the two thousand adjacent isles. Stop, O my Lord.'

'Mara! well do I know that the wheel of sovereignty would appear to me; but it is not sovereignty that I desire. I will become a Buddha, and make the ten thousand world-systems shout for joy.'

Then thought the Tempter to himself: 'Now from this time forth, whenever a thought of lust or anger or malice shall arise within you, I will get to know of it.' And he followed him, ever watching for some slip, as closely as a shadow which never leaves its object.

Years afterwards, when the quest was completed and the goal attained, Gotama sat plunged in meditation on the mysteries which he and he alone now understood. As he cast his eyes over the myriad forms of human character, and thought of the stupid and indifferent, the vain, the selfish, the greedy and passionate, who would not hear the word, the desire arose within him to remain silent: 'With great pains have I acquired it. Enough! why should I now proclaim it? This doctrine will not be easy to understand for beings that are lost in lust and hatred.' This was the real Temptation, to choose a life of ease and rest in quiet seclusion in place of the ceaseless toil of the Teacher. But the Buddhist Order, fixing its thought on the official rather than the personal character of its founder, gathered up the trials of life-long labour into one single battle with the forces of sin.

[1] *Birth Stories* translated by T. W. Rhys Davids, vol. i. p. 84.

On the night when he attained supreme Enlightenment he stood, as an ancient verse said, 'dispelling the hosts of the Evil One, like the sun that illuminates the sky.'[1] Out of this phrase imagination constructed a mighty army which Mara led to the assault. But the weapons that were hurled at him fell as garlands of flowers at his feet. As the Buddha saw the ranks of the fiends approaching, 'Making the virtues my shield,' he thought, 'I must strike this host with the sword of virtue, and thus overwhelm it.' Baffled and defeated, at length Mara departed; 'I find no sin in him,' he said, 'and now indeed he is beyond my power.' Week after week went by, and the Buddha ate no food; the three daughters of Mara, Craving, Discontent, and Lust, tried all their wiles against him, but in vain; until at length on the forty-ninth day the king of the gods brought water for his face, and the four guardian angels ministered unto him.[2] The symbolism of all this is plain enough. It has been developed further than that of the Gospels. But the meaning is still essentially the same. In their temptation, as in their nativity, the figures of the Buddha and the Messiah embody in different forms the eternal hope of the triumph of humanity over evil.

§ 4. The Transfiguration.

Closely connected with the conception of Jesus as Messiah, and likewise linked with his approaching death, is the narrative of the Transfiguration.[3] It follows the

[1] *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xiii. p. 78.

[2] *Birth Stories*, vol. i. p. 96 foll., 106-109.

[3] *Mark* ix. 2-8, and parallels.

scene at Caesarea Philippi which Mark, more clearly than either of the other two Synoptists, represents as a crisis in his ministry. So far he had been the Teacher, the sower of the word, proclaiming the rule or sovereignty of God. But his successes and his dangers, the homage of the crowd, and the hostility of synagogue-rulers, scribes, and Pharisees, all compelled him to define his plans; and as the journey to the capital shaped itself before him, he felt the need of preparing his disciples for the dangerous venture, and determining his own position. So, among the olive groves and poplars beneath the slopes of Mount Hermon, he enquires 'whom do men say that I am?'[1] The answers vary. John the Baptist, they tell him, Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the old prophets risen again. 'But,' continues Jesus, 'whom say ye that I am?' and Peter replies without hesitation, 'Thou art the Messiah.'[2] The word has been uttered, the title confessed, and the Teacher has not rejected it. Jesus does, in fact, accept it; yet it is so liable to misconstruction, so little essential to his present work, that he will have nothing said about it. He was the Messiah, but yet 'he charged them that they should tell no man of him.'

(1) Six days after, Jesus takes Peter and James and John on to a high mountain apart. There he is transfigured before them: his face shines as the sun, and his garments become white as the light. As the three disciples gaze,

[1] So *Mark* viii. 27, *Luke* ix. 18. *Matt.* xvi. 13, however, represents Jesus as already claiming the Messianic function. The variations of the text, 'Who do men say that the Son of Man is?' or 'that I the 'Son of Man am,' show that the simpler form of the question is the original.

[2] On the peculiar addition in *Matt.* xvi. 17-19, see chap. vii. § 4, 6.

they see Moses and Elijah talking with him : they spoke, says Luke, 'of his decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.' The modern English biographers of Jesus, Farrar, Geikie, and Edersheim, have all accepted this as an account of literal fact. Meyer, observing that though Elijah had been carried up to heaven and had a resurrection body, Moses still lay in his unknown sepulchre, suggests that while the change in Jesus was real, the two prophets were not actually present, they were seen only in a vision. This division of the incident into two parts of varying character does not commend itself to other apologists. From Tertullian to Weiss it has been often proposed to treat the whole as a 'subjective' appearance. It is believed that it was dark, and Peter and his comrades, weary with their climb, were heavy with sleep. Might not what they saw have belonged to the visions of the night? In that case they must each have dreamed at the same moment the same dream ; and there is little less difficulty in comprehending how they could all three simultaneously behold the same figures with the inner eye, than in understanding how Moses and Elijah could have been present in bodily shape as two men. Moreover the language of the Third Evangelist, in whichever form we interpret it, leaves no room for the supposition. Our Revisers' text tells us that they saw neither the glory of Jesus nor the two who stood with him till they were fully awake : the margin states that they forced themselves to keep awake and never yielded to the desire for slumber. The theory of a waking vision in no way eases the miracle. No less unsatisfactory have been the efforts to explain the incident out of natural possibilities. At sunset the crest of the mountain was lit up

with a golden glow reflected on the person of Jesus. Shadows, such as may be seen from a Swiss peak projected with huge dimensions on a transparent mist, wore rainbow hues, and were mistaken by excited imagination for the two prophet forms. Or two friends, perhaps Essenes, had been summoned by Jesus to secret conference; and when the thunder-cloud enveloped them, and the divine voice pealed forth, they disappeared, so that Jesus was found alone. The absence of the mythology of nature from the Gospels—save in the rebuke addressed to the wind and sea—renders the first of these suggestions in the highest degree unlikely, to say nothing of its inadequacy to account for the moral elements of the scene: while the collusion attributed to Jesus, at least by the grosser forms of the second, needs only to be mentioned to be at once dismissed. Has modern rationalism no other explanation?

(2) Let it be noted first of all how many points of contact the story shows with the Old Testament. The 'high mountain'—we need not try to decide whether it be Tabor or Hermon—whither Jesus guides Peter, James, and John, is the counterpart of the sacred mountain which Moses climbed, followed by Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu. The face of Jesus shining as the sun was not brighter than that of the great lawgiver, which shone—so said Rabbinic writings—before his death as the sun, and, when he descended from the mount with the tables in his hands, sent forth beams or rays, *Exod.* xxxiv. 29 (margin). The luminous cloud had settled with smoke and fire over the peak where the prophet stood: when the Dwelling-place[1] was reared in

[1] The name given to the 'Tent of Meeting' in the Levitical legislation, *Exod.* xxv. 9.

the wilderness, the cloud descended on it and abode thereon:[1] as the priests came out of the holy place in the Temple after they had deposited the ark in the oracle within, the cloud so filled the house, that they could not stand at the altar for their ministry.[2] Out of the cloud on Sinai came the solemn voice announcing the Ten Words which stood as the foundation of the ancient code.[3] So on the Mount of the Transfiguration did the voice out of the cloud proclaim a lawgiver if not a law, 'This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.' Suggestions of divers utterances blend in these few words. They recall, *Matt.* xvii. 5, the declaration of the Baptism, which Matthew reports in the third person, iii. 17, founded originally on the Messianic poem, *Ps.* ii. 7; they remind us in Luke's version, ix. 35, 'my chosen,' of the Anointed Servant, *Is.* xlii. 1, who is Yahweh's choice, in whom he takes his pleasure; and in the final command, 'hear ye him,' they point to the description, in *Deut.* xviii. 15, of the prophet who should be raised up like unto Moses, concerning whom it was added 'him shall ye hear.'

(3) But these elements need some central thought to combine them and hold them in continuous union. They would not have assembled of themselves; they are too fragmentary to constitute a whole, though they are sufficient to enrich and adorn a conception which can bind them together. What is that conception? The two figures of Moses and Elijah are plainly the representatives of the Law and the Prophets:[4] may it not be said that the Transfiguration is an attempt to express in

[1] *Exod.* xl. 34-35. [2] 1 *Kings* viii. 10-11. [3] *Deut.* v. 22.
[4] On the connection of Elijah with Messiah, see chap. iv. § 3, 3.

pictorial form the relation of Messiah to the two great powers of the Jewish Church? Was this simply one of fulfilment? or did the new dispensation supersede the old? That was a question of great moment for the first believers; it was a question which was most closely connected with the scope of the gospel, and the terms on which the Gentiles could be admitted to the kingdom. The Apostle Paul, at any rate, had no doubt about it. The glory of Moses, after all, was being done away; the light of the knowledge of the glory of God was to be discerned in the face of Jesus Christ. The ministration of death and the letter vanished before the ministration of the spirit and life.[1] What, then, was the agency by which the power of the law was broken? It was by Messiah's death and resurrection. As long as he was in the flesh, Jesus remained under the law; but the cross set him free from these limitations; risen and glorified he belonged no more to Israel only, he was the representative of spiritual humanity; he was the second man, the Lord from heaven. It was the aim of Jewish Christianity to accommodate the new force beside the old. 'Let us make three tabernacles,' cries Peter, 'one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' This was the ideal of the narrower section of the Church: let the Kingdom abide between its two guardians and supports, with Law on the one hand, and Prophecy on the other. But that was not the view of Paul at all. 'The law was a tutor,' he argued,[2] 'to bring us unto Christ,' but once with Messiah, it was needed no more. The heavenly voice, therefore, declares '*This* is my Son, hear *him*:' when the cloud passes, Moses and Elijah

[1] Comp. 2 *Cor.* iii. 7—iv. 6. [2] *Gal.* iii. 24.

have disappeared, and Jesus is found alone. Law and Prophecy have done their work: the religion of humanity needs them no more. That the exaltation of Jesus as spiritual Son of God should be portrayed under the figure of light, harmonises with the repeated tendency of Old Testament imagery. Light is the first divine creation, as the spirit of God broods over the darkness of the deep. Light was the robe with which God clothed himself as with a garment. Light beamed from Moses' face after his solemn communing with Deity upon the mount. Light filled the sky when the Saviour of the world was born; and as in the book of Enoch God's raiment was brighter than sun or snow, so did Messiah's vesture 'became glistering, exceeding white,' while his face shone as the sun. Under such impulses has poetic imagination sought to give shape to the thought of Paul and portray the significance of Messiah's death.[1]

(4) Once more does Indian legend supply a parallel to Christian thought. Death to the Buddha was no hour of humiliation and defeat, it was the final goal which released him from the last elements of attachment to material things, so that he passed away and ceased to be. The Messiah, about to die, sees in the suggestion that his fate shall be averted, a temptation of Satan; but in the

[1] Compare the *Secrets of Enoch*, xxii. 8-10 (when Enoch is brought before the face of the Lord), 'And the Lord said to Michael, "Go and take from Enoch his earthly robe, and anoint him with my holy oil, and clothe him with the raiment of my glory." And so Michael did as the Lord spake unto him. He anointed me and clothed me, and the appearance of that oil was more than a great light, and its anointing was like excellent dew; and its fragrance like myrrh, shining like a ray of the sun. And I gazed upon myself, and I was like one of his glorious ones.'

moral necessity of securing the triumph of his cause, he is expected to live again and return in his followers' lifetime to establish his power. The Buddha, on the other hand, suffers an inverse trial. No sooner has he qualified himself, by the attainment of supreme insight, to reach the goal, than the Evil One proposes to him to escape the weariness of preaching the truth, and die at once. 'I shall not die,' he cries, 'till this pure religion is well proclaimed among men'; and he resists the tempter, and lives and toils for more than fifty years.[1] At length the hour of release arrives. Three months before does he announce to the brethren that the time is at hand. On the last night, ere he has completed his journey, a rich young disciple brings a robe of cloth of gold and lays it on him. But the person of the Buddha shines so clear, so exceeding bright, that the burnished vesture seems no better than a blotch.[2] Later story told how his body glowed like a flame, and his appearance was beautiful above all expression. 'It is true,' said the Blessed One, when the disciple whom he loved observed it: 'the shining light is a certain forerunner of my decease.' Truth and light corresponded in Indian as in Hebrew thought, and reverence for the Buddha chose the same symbol to express his greatness which Christian piety employed for Messiah. For the spiritual imagination is not bound by limitations of race, of country, or of time; it freely borrows out of Nature's store the fittest emblems of its ideas. When these conceptions are in inward harmony, it is not wonderful that they should be clothed in kindred forms.

[1] *Buddhist Suttas*, in *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi., page 53.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 81. I give the literal meaning of the phrase.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MIRACLES.

The value of the Gospel miracles is necessarily estimated very differently in different schools of thought. It is not the purpose of our present enquiry to examine the difficulties attending the conception of miracle in relation to the divine Order of Nature. Nor are we concerned with their evidential aspect, with the connection, that is, between the occurrence of certain outward events and the demonstration of certain truths to the intellect or the enforcement of certain principles on the conscience. The older rationalism of Locke regarded Jesus as proved to be the Messiah by his miracles, though even he observed in his journal privately as early as 1681, 'Even in those books which have the greatest proof of revelation from God, and the attestation of miracles to confirm their being so, the miracles are to be judged by the doctrine, and not the doctrine by the miracles.' The conformity of a given Teaching with the moral and spiritual nature of man appeared, therefore, to Locke to possess far more significance than the external incidents with which it was

associated, and actually supplied a standard by which they might themselves be appraised. At a later stage of thought the most strenuous efforts were made to explain the New Testament miracles out of exaggerated representations of real events. The Transfiguration, it was suggested, was due to the effect of the setting sun upon a thunder cloud; while the two men whom the disciples supposed to be Moses and Elijah, were two friends of Jesus with whom he had appointed a secret meeting, or had even arranged a kind of dramatic display. This method of criticism has given way before a more careful study of the conditions of thought under which miraculous narratives arise. Whether or not miracles really happen, the historian has to account for the belief that they do. He finds that the miracles of any one place or time cannot be considered by themselves, apart from the miracles of other places and times. He takes note of the prevailing character of the age and the people; he asks for contemporary documents, for proofs of careful observation, for the evidence of impartial judgment and correct record. Knowing the mode in which heightened expectation helps to give a special direction to the report of utterance or incident, he enquires into the nature and force of any special ideas which may affect the testimony by powerfully exciting the imagination.[1] Only when due allowance has been made for such sources of error, can he then attempt to ascertain the exact fact, and distinguish it from the alleged explanation.

[1] On this subject see an essay by the late Dr. W. B. Carpenter on 'Fallacies of Testimony in Relation to the Supernatural,' in the *Contemporary Review*, January, 1876, reprinted in *Nature and Man*, p. 239.

§ 1. The Atmosphere of Faith.

How far do the First Three Gospels fulfil these demands? It is plain at once that they are the product of an age of faith; it is the everlasting gain of the human race that they were not written under the dominance of the scientific spirit. But those who search for the historical reality which they contain, cannot excuse themselves from testing them by the methods of scientific enquiry. Let us ask, therefore, first, what were the general aspects of current belief in the period when they took shape.

(1) The mode in which the tradition of Jesus was originally formed, has been already examined. It has been seen that Jesus himself left nothing written. No account of mighty work or wonder has come to us from his own hand. And the narratives of the Evangelists, as the enquiry into their structure will hereafter show, constantly differ in detail, and bear no sort of attestation to their accuracy. In directness of evidential value they must be pronounced to be further from the events which they describe than many records of the later Church. Here, for instance, is the account given by William of Thierry, one of the friends of St. Bernard, of Bernard's treatment by his uncle Galderic and his brother Guido after his first miracles, in 1123, when he was about thirty-two years old.[1]

> Neither did they spare his tender modesty, exciting him with harsh words, deprecating his good deeds, making nothing of his signs, and afflicting the meek and unresisting one even to tears by their harshness and insults. Godfrey, the venerable Bishop of

[1] Translated by J. C. Morison, *Life and Times of St. Bernard*, p. 63.

Langres, who was a near relative of the holy man, and ever afterwards his inseparable companion, used to say that on the occasion of the first miracle which he ever saw him perform, the said Guido was present. It happened as they were passing Chateau Landon in the territory of Sens, that a certain youth having an ulcer in his foot, begged, with many prayers, of Bernard to touch and bless him. Bernard made the sign of the cross, and immediately the lame was healed. A very few days after, as they returned through the same place, they found him whole and well. Still Guido could not be restrained, even by the miracle, from rebuking him, and taxing him with presumption for having consented to touch the lad, so anxious about him in the bond of charity was his brother.

Four and twenty years later, in 1147, Bernard's miracles, observes Mr. Morison, astonished everybody, himself included, so that he became quite uneasy on the subject of his own extraordinary powers. He frequently discussed the matter with certain of the brethren, and his secretary Godfrey reports the Saint's perplexities in the following terms:[1]

I can't think what these miracles mean, or why God has thought fit to work them through such an one as I. I do not remember to have read even in Scripture, of anything more wonderful. Signs and wonders have been wrought by holy men and by deceivers. I feel conscious neither of holiness nor deceit. I know that I have not those saintly merits which are illustrated by miracles. I trust, however, that I do not belong to the number of those who do wonderful things in the name of God, and yet are unknown of the Lord.

The evidence here is derived from Bernard himself, his secretary Godfrey, his relatives and friends; and the miracles were some of them recorded at once in letters written on the Abbot's journey to the brethren in the monastery at Clairvaux.—When Francis Xavier was on his

[1] *Life and Times of St. Bernard*, p. 406.

way back to India after his missionary labour in Japan, in 1551, a terrible storm overtook the ship in which he sailed. At midnight of the second day the ship's boat which had been secured at the stern, was parted from the vessel with fifteen men in her. The ship righted and got once more before the wind, but the boat was lost to sight. When daylight came, nothing could be seen of it. An hour later, Xavier asked the master pilot to send a sailor aloft to look out. The pilot and a sailor climbed to the top together, but after half an hour they reported that nothing appeared. All day Xavier remained in his cabin praying, while the ship ran before the wind. At sunset he came on deck again, and then begged the pilot and the mate to go aloft once more. They remained up a good long time, but still affirmed they could see nothing over the whole sea. After moments of earnest prayer, while Xavier laid his hand upon the bulwark, a boy seated in the shrouds cried 'Miracle, miracle, here is our boat.' It was on the waves, not further than a gunshot off. The sailors wept and shouted; they came to throw themselves at Xavier's feet; but he withdrew into the Captain's cabin and shut himself up inside that no one might speak to him. Meanwhile, the crew of the lost boat were received into the ship. This incident is related in full by Mendez Pinto who was on board the vessel at the time; it was supported by the evidence of various others, passengers and crew, including two Portuguese noblemen connected with the royal house, a sea captain, and the man who went aloft to look out, who gave their testimony under oath juridically.[1] There is nothing in the New Testa-

[1] See the *Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier*, by Henry James Coleridge, S. J., vol. ii. pp. 352-357.

ment to be compared to this for precision and detail; just as there is nothing in the tradition of Jesus so explicit and so near the event as the language of Bernard and the letters of his Secretary. But the cures may be explained physiologically, as the result of the influence of a potent personality aided by the patient's faith and hope; while in the case of the restoration of the boat and its crew we ask how long after the event was the narrative of Mendez Pinto recorded, were the depositions of the witnesses taken separately, why were none of the fifteen men in the boat examined; and since these and other questions cannot be answered, we suspend our judgment, without attempting to determine what may have been the real circumstances at the bottom of the story.

(2) Although, however, Jesus left no record, we are not without evidence, apart from the Gospels, of the thoughts and feelings of the age in which they arose. The early Church, the cultivated Gentile mind, the teaching in which Jewish education consisted, are all known to us; and these throw abundant light on the contemporary modes of belief.

(*a*) If there be no written word from Jesus, there is from the apostle Paul; and he undoubtedly claims both for himself and for the Church at large, the possession of miraculous power.

For I will not dare to speak of any things save those which Christ wrought through me, for the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the holy Spirit.—*Rom.* xv. 18, 19.

In nothing was I behind the very chiefest apostles, though I am nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, by signs and wonders and mighty works.—*2 Cor.* xii. 11, 12.

The character of the signs and wonders is not here specified: it may perhaps be inferred from the enumeration of the gifts bestowed on the Church, *1 Cor.* xii. 9, 10, 28:—

> To another gifts of healings, in the one Spirit; and to another workings of miracles [mighty works, as in *2 Cor.* xii. 12]; and to another prophecy; and to another discernings of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; and to another the interpretation of tongues. . . . . God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles [mighty works], then gifts of healing, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues.

No particulars are ever given by the apostle, but it is plain that the most diverse elements of belief could co-exist in his mind. Side by side with the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans stands a reference to the extraordinary Rabbinic fancy that the rock whence Moses drew a miraculous water-supply actually followed the Israelites in their wanderings for forty years; 'for they drank of a spiritual rock which followed them,' the apostle adding triumphantly, 'and the rock was Christ,' *1 Cor.* x. 4. Such conceptions presented no difficulties to him; they were easily transformed by a glowing imagination into facts. But the account which the apostle supplies, *1 Cor.* xiv., concerning prophesying and speech with tongues, which made the meetings of the Church seem rather like assemblies of lunatics, shows how ready he was to believe in supernatural agencies. The excited and unintelligible utterance 'in a tongue' appeared due to the influence of some higher power. It was, in his view, a gift of 'the Spirit.'

(*b*) That signs and wonders should be expected within the Church is not surprising, when they were frequently

happening elsewhere. Prodigies and portents are recorded again and again by the historians of Rome; and instances have been already cited of the ease with which such stories could attach themselves to famous names, The Emperor Vespasian, so Tacitus and Suetonius relate, gave sight to a blind man at Alexandria. During the last siege of Jerusalem the air seemed thick with marvels. Before it began, a star resembling a sword, reports Josephus, stood over the doomed city. The great eastern gate of the Temple, wrought of bronze, which could scarce be closed by twenty men, opened of itself when firmly bolted into the solid floor, and swung slowly back. The guards came running to the Captain of the sacred house and told him of it, and it was with difficulty shut. At Pentecost, the priests going by night into the inner court, felt a quaking and heard a great noise: and then came a mighty voice saying, 'Let us remove hence' What are these but symbols, like the heavenly voices or the darkness and the earthquake and the rent veil of the Gospel story?

(*c*) While Roman and Jewish thought in the age of the evangelical tradition was thus prone to wonders, the later evidences of Christian belief and feeling point no less in the same direction. Ambrose and Augustine in the fourth century both bear their personal testimony with a sincerity beyond dispute to marvellous cures, with which they were directly or indirectly concerned. Nor is the witness limited to cases of this kind. It is equally explicit and direct respecting miracles of physical nature. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, 367-403 A.D., affirms that down to his own time the change of water into wine was repeated in many places as a testimony to

unbelievers. He names a fountain at Cibyra in Caria where this occurred, and specifies another at Gerasa, adding that he himself had drunk of one, and his brother of the other.

(*d*) The parallel course of the traditions of the Synagogue embodied in the Talmud presents similar illustrations. Students of this great collection aver that miracles are far more common in the accounts of the Rabbis, than they are in the New Testament. The belief in their occurrence is one of the foundations of all its pictures of social life. The men who by their prayers removed diseases and other calamities, like Rabbi Hanîna ben Dosa, Nicodemus, &c., were called Miracle-workers (literally, 'Men of work'). Again and again, the Teacher's word is enforced by wonders. At times, indeed, some Rabbi will refuse to grant the demand for a sign, like the Teacher in the Gospels; though, unlike Jesus, he finally yields to it. Thus in the great Messianic discussion in the Talmudic treatise *Sanhedrin*, the following story is related:—

Rabbi José was asked by his disciples 'When will the Son of David come?' To this he replied, 'I am afraid you will ask me also for a sign.' Upon which they assured him they would not. On this he replied, 'When this gate (viz. of Rome) shall fall, and be built, and again fall, and they shall not have time to rebuild it till the Son of David comes.' They said to him, 'Rabbi, give us a sign.' He said to them, 'Have ye not promised me that ye would not seek a sign?' They said to him, 'Notwithstanding do it.' He said to them, 'If so the waters from the Cave of Pamias [one of the sources of the Jordan] shall be changd into blood.' In that moment they were changed into blood.[1]

Rabbi Eliezer uproots a carob tree from its place, and

[1] Edersheim, *Life and Times of Messiah*, vol. ii. p. 737.

removes it one hundred cubits (some say four hundred, adds the story) to prove the truth of his teaching; and when his opponents declare this to be no proof, he turns the waters of a stream backwards. Two dumb men received the gift of speech from Rabbi Jehudah the Holy.[1] Cures were wrought at a distance, as in the following example :—

It happened that the son of Rabbi Gamliel was ill. He sent two disciples of the wise to Rabbi Hanina to ask for mercy upon him. As soon as Rabbi Hanina saw them, he went into an upper room and asked mercy for him. When he came down, he said to them, 'Go, the fever has left him.' They said to him 'Art thou a prophet?' He said to them, 'I am not a prophet, neither the son of a prophet: but this I have received, that if my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know that it is accepted, but if not I know that it is rejected.' They sat down and wrote and fixed the exact hour; and when they came to Rabbi Gamliel, he said to them, 'By the service! you are exactly right. Even so it was, at that hour the fever left him, and he asked of us water to drink.'

Other Rabbis even raise the dead, and in a very singular story concerning the visits paid to a Rabbi by the Emperor Antoninus, the Caesar remarks, 'I know that even the smallest among you recalls the dead to life.'

It is thus plain that the conditions of thought in which miraculous narratives arise, existed in both the Jewish and the Gentile world during the era in which the Gospel tradition took its present shape. Can we, then, point to any special causes which gathered a halo of wonder round the person of Jesus? It is not possible to explain every individual marvel, or find the exact incident whence it has sprung. But it may be possible to discover the

[1] These instances have been kindly communicated to me by the Rev. R. Travers Herford, B.A.

ideas and feelings which have helped to create these stories, and to account for the typical forms which special tendencies of thought have assumed. We shall find that they are closely connected with the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. In the glory which encircled the great hope of the Deliverer, imagination was not confined to fact, just as the romantic incidents of the struggle of the Maccabees for national freedom were adorned with pictures of heavenly powers aiding the champions of the people of God. So fixed was the expectation of Messiah's wonders that it is alleged that one of the reasons for the failure of the Messianic pretensions of the 'Son of the Star' (Bar Kokhba), in the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, lay in his inability to work miracles. Sickness and suffering would make a special appeal to him. Rabbi Joshua, so runs a Talmudic story, once asked Elijah when Messiah would come. 'Go and ask him thyself,' replied the Prophet. 'And where does he abide?' enquired the Rabbi. 'At the gate of the city.' 'And what is his sign?' 'He sits among the poor, the sick and the stricken, and they show him their sores, and he binds them up again one by one.'

§ 2. Cure of Demoniacs.

Many of the 'mighty works' of Jesus were cures. For these, as he himself again and again testifies, faith was an indispensable element. 'Thy faith hath made thee whole,' is his own remark. The real force which worked the patient's cure dwelt in his own mind: the power of Jesus lay in the potency of his personality to evoke this force. Where that failed, where he could not inspire this

conviction, there, as the earliest tradition tells us, *Mark* vi. 5,[1] 'he could do no mighty work.'

(1) Among the miracles of healing, a prominent place is occupied by what is described as casting out devils. It must be remembered that this was a regular practice on the part of professional exorcists; and that the records of the time supply ample evidence of its occurrence both in Palestine and elsewhere. That the epileptic or hysterical should grow calm in the presence of the Teacher, is perfectly intelligible. But the Gospels relate these incidents in the glow of Messianic faith. In the language ascribed to Jesus himself they were a manifestation of that great agency of righteousness known as 'the kingdom of God.' So far is he, however, from claiming any exclusive control of this power, that he distinctly recognises its possession by others. When he is accused of casting out devils by Beelzebub, he replies, 'By whom do your sons cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.' 'But,' he adds, 'if I by the finger of God cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come upon you.' In his hand, then,—so the Church believed—the expulsion of the demons is part of Messiah's war with evil; and this conviction, in the minds of the Evangelists, has tended to give these stories a peculiar form. In the first day's teaching at Capernaum, an unclean spirit in some poor sufferer bursts out in the synagogue, *Mark* i. 24:—

> What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

[1] Comp. chap. v. § 3, 2.

And the same evening the process is continued, i. 34 : —

> And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and he suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

'Knew him'—to be what? Luke is more explicit, iv. 41. 'He suffered them not to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ'; and later copyists added to Mark's text the supplementary words 'to be Christ.' Thus before Jesus has himself made any such claim, before his followers have confessed him, or the people have recognised him, do the evil spirits own him as their Lord. The later faith moulds the earlier reminiscence.

(2) Other elements are sometimes taken up into such stories. They are told and retold, with fresh applications, and by degrees the details are defined under the influence of thoughts which did not belong to the original narrative. As they stand now in our Gospels they are really the result of a long process, which has obscured the facts from which it started, and has produced a kind of fancy picture beyond the reach of historical analysis. Thus in the story of the demoniac of Gerasa, *Mark* v. 1-20, and parallels, the fundamental theme is Messiah's victory over the demonic powers. The language of the Evangelists plainly shows that in its simplest form the unhappy sufferer was 'a man with an unclean spirit,' *Mark* v. 2, cp. i. 23. Running to Jesus from afar, he flings himself at his feet, addressing him as Messiah. Jesus commands the unclean spirit to come forth, *Mark* v. 8, *Luke* viii. 29. So far the story resembles the scene in the synagogue at Capernaum. At this point, it might have ended with the demoniac's cure. But now, in the

question of Jesus, 'What is thy name?' it unexpectedly takes a fresh development. The poor lunatic is under the delusion that a whole 'Legion'[1] of devils lodged within him.[2] The single 'unclean spirit' is thus multiplied by a word four-thousandfold; and the fantasy of madness is treated in the rest of the story as sober fact. Under Messiah's decree of expulsion, these demons now begin to make terms with him. In *Mark* v. 10, the sufferer himself pleads with Jesus on their behalf that he will not send them away out of the country. But in *Luke* viii. 31, they themselves entreat that he will not bid them depart '*into the abyss*.' That was the destined abode of durance for the powers of evil; there would Satan be hurled, in Messiah's triumph, and kept in bondage for a thousand years, *Rev.* xx. 2, 3. The demons in *Matt.* viii. 29, accordingly, objected to be tormented '*before the time*.' One way to the abyss, the underworld, cp. *Rom.* x. 7, was supposed to lie through the sea; and this is perhaps the reason why the swine into which they enter, rush down the steep into the lake, and perish in the waters. But were the swine real swine? How came they into the story? As it stands now, some critics have found in it a touch of grotesque humour. The stupid devils thought to save themselves by their request that they might be transferred to the herd pasturing on the slope. They were miserably deceived, they only ensured their own doom the more quickly! The meaning of the swine it is hard to determine. Were they originally

[1] A Roman legion consisted of 4,000 men.

[2] This has already influenced the earlier part of Luke's narrative; in ver. 27 he describes the man as having 'devils': in ver. 29 he command of Jesus is addressed to '*the* unclean spirit.'

only the brain-sick vision of the possessed, who imagined he saw the demons within him rushing forth in the shape of the unclean animals? No definite answer can be given. But it is possible that some such wild utterance may have started the tale, which was elaborated afterwards under other influences. The incident, it will be observed, is placed in the Decapolis, on the east of the lake of Galilee and the Jordan valley. The region was largely heathen, and Gerasa appears to have been the seat of the worship of the great goddess-mother Cybělê. Now the swine was a recognised Jewish symbol of heathen impurities; and we know from the Apostle Paul that the early Christians regarded the Gentile gods as demons, *1 Cor.* x. 20. The destruction of the swine would then be the emblem of the overthrow of false worship; the vanishing of the demons in the abyss at Messiah's command is only the translation into incident of the disappearance of the idol deities before the preaching of the Gospel. It is hardly to be supposed that these conceptions were *consciously* brought together and combined. The story is not an elaborate invention; it is a gradual growth, whose several forms enable some of its varying conceptions to be traced. All the more likely is it, therefore, that it absorbed into itself different symbols, drawn from various circles of ideas. But if this be so, it will only be understood in its whole meaning in connection with the events of a later time. If it really contains an allusion to the subsequent victories of Christianity over heathenism, it cannot have finally acquired its existing shape until after the labours of the great apostle of the Gentiles; and the miracle of Messiah beyond Jewish soil will thus give the seal to the mission-

ary activity of Paul. Thus may allegory and history have contributed to bring the story into its present form.[1]

(3) If the multitude of the demons in the Gerasene incident be due to a misinterpretation of the sufferer's self-chosen title, it is possible, as has been acutely suggested,[2] that a double meaning in the word *pneuma* (Hebrew and Aramean *ruach*) 'spirit' or 'wind' may lie beneath a pair of narratives of the calming of a demoniac and the calming of a storm. When Jesus 'rebukes' the 'spirit' in the synagogue at Capernaum, *Mark* i. 25, he says to it 'Hold thy peace' (Greek PHIMO-*thêti*, literally 'be thou muzzled'). When he 'rebukes' the 'wind' and the sea upon the lake, *Mark* iv. 39, he addresses it with the same word, 'hold thy peace' (Greek PEPHIMO-*so*: the English version, missing this identity, has 'be still'). The idea of muzzling a *pneuma* (or *ruach*) might be applied either to a rebellious spirit or to a tumultuous wind; the expression would be remembered; and then, blending with other reminiscence, would gradually adapt itself to two wholly different occasions. Traces of this still remain in the sequel, which relates the obedience of the *pneuma*. This likewise might bear a double significance: in the first scene the hearers exclaim 'What is this? With authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him'; while in the second, the disciples exclaim 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

[1] Comp. Keim, *Jesus of Nazara*, iv. pp. 150-158; *Bible for Young People*, vi. pp. 284-286.—On the *two* demoniacs of Matthew, see below, chap. vii. § 1, 4.

[2] *The Kernel and the Husk*, p. 220.

§ 3. Old Testament Elements.

While Messiah triumphs over the powers of evil, the coming age will bring with it bodily renovation for the maimed and infirm. This was a favourite theme of prophecy, and may lead the way, therefore, to the consideration of the suggestiveness of Scripture thought and language.

(1) When the apostle Paul meets the difficulty of the Corinthians concerning the resurrection, 'But some man will say, How are the dead raised, and with what body do they come?' he deals with an objection that was not raised at Corinth only, and he answers it with an analogy which is curiously paralleled elsewhere. Queen Cleopatra, it is said, asked Rabbi Meir whether the dead would rise naked or clothed.

> I will show thee this, replied the Rabbi, by a conclusion drawn from the less to the greater, from the grain of wheat. For behold, the grain of wheat which is buried naked, springs forth out of the earth with many clothes: how much more the righteous with their clothes.

Sometimes similar questions were settled by a reference to prophecy. Another Rabbi argued thus:

> It is written, Behold I will gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together; and in another place it is written, Then shall the lame man leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb sing. How is this possible? They shall rise with their defects, but then be healed.

Such passages as these here quoted seem to have been often in the minds of the disciples of Jesus, and tended to colour the tradition of Messiah's activity, especially when it was detached from special cases of individual

cures, and generalised into descriptions of whole series and kinds. Thus when Jesus sits upon the mount to heal, as he had formerly sat to deliver the law of the kingdom, we are told, *Matt.* xv. 30, 31 :—

> There came unto him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at his feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.

Sometimes the influence of prophecy and the desire to show Messiah's conformity with its demand, is still more clear,[1] it is in fact openly avowed; as in the following, *Matt.* viii. 16, 17 :—

> And when even was come, they brought unto him many possessed with devils; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases.

The application of such prophecies, thus interpreted, to Jesus, at once created a special expectation of his healing energy; and this, seizing on the actual material supplied by apostolic recollection, gradually moulded the details into congenial forms.

(2) This process was no doubt promoted by the tendency to convert symbols into actual incidents and turn figures into facts. 'They that are whole,' said Jesus, in reply to the critics who objected to his associating with publicans and sinners, 'have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.' Here was a metaphor all ready for

[1] Comp. chap. i., p. 40 *ff.*

use. The Teacher was the great healer of the sores and wounds of men's hearts and lives: and moral cure easily associated with itself the idea of physical restoration. In ancient Hebrew thought the two orders, the material and the spiritual, were so closely related, that the one might constantly stand for the other. So Jesus describes himself in the words of Isaiah as anointed 'to preach good tidings to the poor and to proclaim recovering of sight to the blind,' *Luke* iv. 18; and the Apostle Paul is sent to the Gentiles 'to open their eyes,' *Acts* xxvi. 17.[1] The blind who lead the blind, the deaf who have ears but will not hear, the halt and maimed who have stumbled and fallen upon the way, all stand for various forms of moral and spiritual impotence, which tradition has sometimes transmuted into physical infirmity. Thus when the messengers of John the Baptist carry to Jesus their master's question 'Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?' Jesus replies, *Matt.* xi. 4, 5:—

> Go your way and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them.

The last clause, reminding us of the language of the Servant of old, *Is.* lxi. 1, 2, already quoted, proves that the passage is throughout symbolic: But the Third Evangelist did not so understand it: he translates the words of Jesus into bodily reality, inserting the following statement to justify the Teacher's answer, *Luke* vii. 21:—

[1] So in the Book of Enoch as quoted above, p. 66, when the sheep were gathered into the sacred house, 'the eyes of all were opened, so that they saw the good, and there was not one among them that had not sight.'

In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and on many that were blind he bestowed sight.

Both Gospels contain the phrase 'the dead are raised up.' Life and death were immemorial emblems of good and evil,[1] and they constantly occur in that sense in the New Testament. 'This my son was dead and is alive again,' says the prodigal's father. The symbolism runs all through the thought of Paul, as he addresses the believers who were once dead in trespasses and sins, but are now risen with Christ and alive unto God. It passed into an early hymn, where sleep and death stand as twin figures side by side, *Ephes.* v. 14:—

> Awake, thou that sleepest,
> And arise from the dead.

The Synoptical narratives present but one instance in common of raising the dead,—viz. the little daughter of Jairus; and in this case Mark relates that Jesus expressly told the mourners that she was not dead but sleeping, v. 39. Luke, however, prefixes to the message brought by the Baptist's disciples the beautiful story of the raising of the widow's son at Nain, vii. 11-17. No other Evangelist reports it: Jesus bears in it the Messianic title 'the Lord,' ver. 13: the incident is placed at Nain, on the slope of the same mountain on which Shunem lay, where Elisha had raised, so ancient legend told, an only son. The incident seems to owe its place in the narrative to the Evangelist's desire to prepare the way for the statement in ver. 22, 'the dead are raised up'; and the language of its sequel, ver. 16, implies that it has been modelled on prophetic example.

(3) This points to a third element in the circle of

[1] See *Deut.* xxx. 15, 19, &c.

early Christian conceptions, viz. the influence of Scripture types. Instances of this have been traced already in the story of the Annunciation;[1] but they are not confined to the legends of the Birth. Of the great personalities of the Old Testament two were especially connected with the Messianic hope, Moses and Elijah. Moses, as the giver of the first law, stood as the counterpart to the king and judge who should issue and administer the second; and Elijah had long since been designated as the forerunner who should prepare the way for the great and dreadful day of the Lord.[2] Accordingly, in one of the sections of the Revelation, in which Jewish conceptions are most prominent, these two figures appear with their former powers to shut up the heavens, to turn waters into blood, and smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire, *Rev.* xi. 3-6. In the Transfiguration the same pair stand on either side of the Son of God. Thus they belonged to the imaginative atmosphere which invested the Messianic ideal; and their own features are sometimes reproduced in him. As Moses had fasted forty days upon the mount, and Elijah in the desert on the way to Horeb, so does Messiah spend forty days without food in the wilderness. Moses fed Israel on the wanderings, and Jesus feeds the multitude in the desert place. Elijah multiplied the widow's oil, and Jesus multiplied the five loaves and two fishes. Elijah raised the widow's son at Zarephath; 'the Lord' does the same at Nain. Thus, by written prophecy, by symbolic language, and by heroic types, does the influence of the Old Testament help to call into being the wonders of the New.

[1] See chap. iii., p. 131. [2] *Mal.* iv. 5.

§ 4. Language of Parable and Hymn.

If single words sometimes carried in them elements that could take literal and material shape, so might parable and hymn. The language of imagination and feeling is constantly in danger of being materialized by minds of duller insight and feebler emotion.

(1) The story of the cursing of the fig-tree[1] appears to owe its origin to some such confusion. As Jesus goes in from Bethany to Jerusalem with the disciples, he hungers, and seeks fruit from a fig-tree by the road side. It was not the time for figs, observes Mark, and he found nothing but leaves: 'No man eat fruit from thee henceforward for ever,' said Jesus. Passing by the same way the next day, *Mark* xi. 20, they saw the fig-tree withered away from the roots.[2] Was this a real fig-tree? Did the Teacher really curse it because it did not bear fruit out of season? And did it actually shrivel up, either on the instant or even within four and twenty hours? The biographers of Jesus, who have pleaded for the literal character of the incident, have not succeeded in relieving the Son of God from the charge of unreasonable violence against an innocent and unconscious tree. But a comparison with the Third Gospel points to a way out of the difficulty. This story does not appear in Luke; but, on the other hand, he relates a *parable* of a fig-tree planted in a vineyard, on which the owner looks for figs and finds none, xiii. 6-9. After three successive years he proposes to cut it down; but the vine-dresser entreats that it may have one more chance. The mean-

[1] *Mark* xi. 12-14, 20-21, with parallel in *Matt.* xxi. 18-20.

[2] Matthew, xxi. 19, heightens the miracle by making the fig-tree wither away at once, before their eyes, cp. chap. v. § 3, 2.

ing of the parable is plain. The vineyard and the vine are the ancient prophetic symbols for the people of Israel, cp. *Is.* v. 1-7, *Ps.* lxxx. 8-15. Why not the fig-tree also? Hosea had actually used the very image, ix. 10:—

> I found Israel like grapes in the wilderness,
> I saw your fathers as the first ripe in the fig-tree at her first season.[1]

So the parable describes Israel's unworthiness to receive the kingdom, it does nothing but cumber the ground. If it cannot show itself fit, it must perish. The same essential idea has become materialised in the story. The fig-tree has a fine show of leaves, like the outward decoration of Israel's piety: but the true fruit of righteousness does not ripen amid all this display, and the barrenness of the people draws its own doom upon them. What that doom would be, ancient prophecy did not leave doubtful. Its latest word was a promise that before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, Elijah should come to reconcile fathers and children, lest the Lord himself should come and smite the land with a curse.[2] Upon the vineyard of the unfaithful nation its divine owner would pronounce sentence that it should be laid waste; no pruning hook nor hoe should be applied to it; the very clouds should be commanded to withhold their rain.[3] There was the fate of the fig-tree already prefigured! Like the righteous king who was to slay the wicked with the breath of his lips,[4] so does the true sovereign of Israel smite it with the rod of his mouth! At his word its worthless professions are stricken with blight, its pomp and glory shrivel, and only its naked branches show what it might

Comp. *Jer.* xxiv. 2-10. [2] *Mal.* iv. 6. [3] *Is.* v. 6. [4] *Is.* xi. 4.

have been. The symbol was not hard to understand.[1] But the report of the Teacher's word, as it was passed from hand to hand, dropped one detail on its transit in one direction, took up another along a different line, and thus gradually split into two distinct shapes. In one of these the meaning of the parable was clearly retained. The other was remembered as a story—a fig-tree in full leaf—a doom—a withering—but its significance was gone: it became a mere anecdote which of course attached itself in time to Jesus.[2] Then it was fitted with a place and date, due possibly to some actual reminiscence, and in this shape it was incorporated into the traditions. But in sifting the materials available for his work, the Third Evangelist had sufficient insight to choose the parable.

(2) These processes of necessity imply some lapse of time. But they operated upon stories which certainly might have had some real nucleus of saying or incident.

[1] In Buddhist legend a converse miracle took place. As the great minister Basita stood at the gates of the Lumbini garden when the infant Buddha was born, he saw the trees and flowers bursting into life. 'See,' he observed to his colleagues, 'how all the trees are blossoming *as if the season had come*.' The wondrous verdure had its own meaning. 'It referred,' said the narrator, 'to the faith which those were able to arrive at who heard the first teachings of the sage.' Beal, *Romantic History of Buddha*, pp. 45, 46.

[2] Great importance is ascribed in Talmudic stories to the curse of a Rabbi, which possesses a mysterious and terible power, and is even said to have been regarded as infallibly fatal. It is called the serpent of the Rabbis, whose bite is incurable.—In Samoa, according to Dr. Turner, *Samoa*, p. 23, the eye of a certain high priest and prophet bearing the title Tupai had the same deadly power: 'If he looked at a cocoa-nut tree, it died; if he ganced at a bread-fruit tree, it withered away.'

In other cases the influences at work belong to the cycle of feeling which could only be active after the death of Jesus. The emblematic language of the Hebrew Scriptures was constantly in the hearts and upon the lips of the Christian believer; and when the Church portrayed its hours of peril and deliverance, they were presented in the figures which Israel's poetry supplied. There it was that the divine power was described as 'treading upon the waves of the sea,' *Job* ix. 8, or as having his way in the sea and his path in the great waters, *Ps.* lxxvii. 19. In days of persecution the Church saw itself tossed like a ship upon a sea of troubles, and words of ancient song came peacefully to the believer's heart, *Ps.* cvii. 28-30:—

> Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,
> And he bringeth them out of their distresses.
> He maketh the storm a calm,
> So that the waves thereof are still.
> Then are they glad because they be quiet,
> So he bringeth them unto the haven where they would be.

The Christian hymns might well have contained the same image: they too might have sung—

> Thy way is in the deep, O Lord!
> E'en there we'll go with thee:
> We'll meet the tempest at thy word,
> And walk upon the sea!

Out of some such utterance of trust[1] has probably come the story of the disciples on their passage across the lake distressed by a contrary wind, *Mark* vi. 48. Jesus had remained alone behind to pray: but in the fourth watch of the night, as they labour at the oar, they see him

[1] See this idea worked out in *Onesimus* by the author of *Philochristus*, p. 276.

walking past them on the waves. Supposing it is an apparition, they cry out in fear; answering 'It is I, be not afraid,' he joins them in the boat, and the wind ceases. It is noteworthy that the Third Evangelist omits the story altogether, regarding it probably as only a varying duplicate of another episode on a voyage the opposite way, *Luke* viii. 22-25, *Mark* iv. 35-41. The fear of the disciples gives occasion to a lesson in faith, and this is obviously the significance of the anecdote which Matthew adds to the night voyage of Mark. When Peter recognises his Master's voice, he cries, *Matt.* xiv. 28, 'Lord, if it be thou, bid me come to thee upon the waters.' Through the raging of the storm he hears the word 'Come.' Descending from the boat, he seeks to walk upon the waves, but when he sees the wind he is afraid, and begins to sink. Do we not all know the meaning of the tale? Have we not all, in temptation or danger, cried 'Lord, save us?' Have we not all felt the outstretched hand supporting us, and known the encouragement mingling with the rebuke, 'O ye of little faith, wherefore did ye doubt?' Of such a story, Peter, foremost in impulse and in promise, who alone followed Jesus on the fatal night of trial and then denied him, might well become the hero; and in his person the Church recorded its own experience.

(3) It is the less difficult to believe that these tendencies have been at work in the Gospel tradition, when they can be shown in operation elsewhere. Buddhist imagery often employed the sea or the stream to typify the place of conflict across which all must pass. The delivered, the saved, were those who stood upon the other side. The Buddha conveyed his disciples thither: by the

causeway of the Noble Path they traversed the shallows of lust and ignorance and delusion, whilst ordinary men sought to get across by means of rites and ceremonies, gifts and sacrifices, which were no more solid than mere rafts of baskets. That is the symbolism which lies behind the following verse :—

> They who cross the ocean drear,
> Making a solid path across the pools—
> Whilst the vain world ties its basket rafts—
> These are the wise, these are the saved indeed.

When was such a verse uttered? The Tradition found an occasion for it when the Teacher once came to the Ganges with his disciples. The river was full, and there was no boat. There were others seeking to cross by hastily made rafts of wood and basket-work; but the Blessed One 'vanished from this side of the river, and stood on the further bank with the company of the brethren.' Then as he beheld the people looking for the rafts, he brake forth into the song.[1] The moral idea that the Buddha and his disciples were those who had 'crossed,' had been materialised into the story of his miraculous transport of them over the river. If the Blessed One was not there himself, an act of faith might enable the believer to make the passage in another way. The following story is told of such a disciple :—

One day going to Jetavana (where the Teacher was staying) to hear the Truth, he came in the evening to the bank of the river Aciravati. When he reached the landing place, however, he saw no boat, so taking a joyful confidence in the Buddha, he went down into the stream. His feet did not sink in the water. Walking as

[1] See *Buddhist Suttas*, translated by Professor T. W. Rhys Davids, *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. xi. p. 21.

on the ground, by the time he got into the middle he saw waves. Then his confidence in the Buddha became slack, and his feet began to sink. But he made his joyful confidence in the Buddha firm, and, proceeding on the surface of the water, came to Jetavana.

There is no mystery here. Every Christian reader will discern in the story a transparent allegory of the faith in the Buddha which enables the earnest heart to cross the stream on the other side of which lie truth and deliverance. An instructed Buddhist, meeting the story of Peter's attempt to walk upon the lake, would at once regard it as an allegory of like faith in the Christ. Shall we not freely admit that he would be right?

§ 5. Allegorical Composition.

Between parable and allegory it may sometimes seem difficult to draw a line. There are some narratives which appear to be due to the desire to present certain ideas and conceptions in pictorial form as episodes in Messiah's career. By this means a kind of sanction was secured for the truths or usages with which they deal. This character is strongly impressed on some of the descriptions in the Fourth Gospel; it is, perhaps, not absent even in the First Three.

(1) To this class we may probably assign the account of the miraculous draught of fishes, related in *Luke* v. 1-11, and in Luke alone, though an analogous story appears at the end of the Fourth Gospel, *John* xxi. 3-11. The Galilean ministry of Jesus opens, according to *Mark* i. 16, *Matt.* iv. 18, with the call of Simon and Andrew, by the lake side; and this is followed by a similar call to James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Luke, with a

different representation of the first incidents, omits this twofold summons; though in the subsequent narrative he follows Mark, and describes Jesus as entering into the house of Simon, iv. 38, while he has not yet told his readers who Simon is.[1] The call, however, in Luke's arrangement, is only postponed, and is appended, v. 10, to the story of the multitude of fishes, which seems rather to embody an idea than to describe an occurrence. It opens with a picture of Jesus entering a boat, which is then pushed off a little from the beach, to teach the crowd which has gathered upon the shore. Mark and Matthew relate this incident likewise; but with them, *Mark* iv., *Matt.* xiii., it stands as the introduction to the parable of the Sower, which Luke postpones till viii. 4, allotting it to some unnamed place upon a missionary tour. Here, therefore, we already have evidence of fresh and artificial arrangement. When the teacher has finished, he bids Simon put out into the deep, and let down his nets for a draught. Though he had toiled all night, and taken nothing, this time a vast number are enclosed, and the nets begin to break. Smitten with amazement, in which James and John, his partners, shared, he falls at Jesus' knees: but Jesus bids him not to fear, and adds 'From henceforth thou shalt catch men.' When they come to shore, Simon and James and John leave all and follow him. This conclusion shows plainly that Luke designs this story as an equivalent for the double call which he has omitted. Mark, with whom Matthew agrees, reported the symbolic saying of Jesus in these terms: 'I will make you to become fishers of men.' The idea is the same, and the difference of form is slight.

[1] On this dislocation of order, see chap. vi. § 1, 3.

There are other small variations which are not in favour of the credibility of Luke's account. According to Matthew and Mark, Simon was associated with his brother Andrew; while James and John worked with their father Zebedee, whose operations were large enough, according to Mark, to require the additional help of 'hired servants.' Luke, however, ignores Andrew, and represents James and John as partners with Simon. Zebedee, if he still lived, is at any rate not named. All these divergences excite our suspicion, and imply some purpose. That purpose lies embedded in the story, whose real theme is 'catching men.' As Jesus teaches from the boat, the true fishing is already begun: at the close, Simon, James and John, are his 'take.' But there is more than this. The intervening miracle, placed in such unhistorical juxtapositions, contains a wider application of the same thought. 'Fishers of men!' Who are the men far out in the deep? The meaning is suggested by a parable ascribed to Jesus, *Matt.* xiii. 47:—

> Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.

The deep is the world, where there are men of every race. Simon's disinclination to let down the nets finds its explanation in the unwillingness of the Jewish party to open the Gospel to the heathen. This is why Simon, James, and John are partners: we know from the Apostle Paul that they were the three leaders of the 'circumcision,' *Gal.* ii. 9. When the attempt is made, the broken meshes are the symbol of the resulting dangers and discords in the Church. This miracle is not named in the Fourth Gospel, but a similar narrative in

John xxi. describes a corresponding occurrence after the resurrection. There, too, the disciples have toiled all night and have taken nothing. There, too, Jesus commands one more cast of the net. And there, too, it captures a multitude of fish. But this time, the net is not broken, it is drawn to shore, to the feet of Christ. The difficulties connected with the admission of the Gentiles have been overcome; Catholic unity has not been disturbed; and Jew and Greek are joined in undivided allegiance to their Lord. The two narratives provide the same theme with the same setting of general circumstance. The slight differences of detail alone betray that they belong to successive periods in the history of the Church.[1]

(2) Is not the same imaginative play of thought and feeling to be discerned in the story of the wondrous feeding of the five thousand? Mark and Matthew relate, indeed, two incidents of this kind, *Mark* vi. 35-44, viii. 1-9, *Matt.* xiv. 15-21, xv. 32-38, while Luke, apparently regarding the second as a duplicate of the first, is content with one, ix. 12-17, and with this conclusion most modern critics, including even apologists like Weiss, agree. Like the walking on the waves, the miracle involves a command over material objects and forces which gives rise at once to a whole host of difficulties. How strongly these press on the believer, and how urgent is the necessity of escape from them somehow, may be inferred from the following attempt of the writer just named:—[2]

[1] Comp. *Bible for Young People*, v. pp. 163-165.

[2] *Life of Christ*, ii. p. 384.

Although it has been a subject of discussion, we may regard it as sufficiently evident that the bread did not increase in the hands of the people or the disciples. But we find no answer to the question whether each of the five loaves grew under the hands of Jesus until a fifth part of the multitude was provided for, or whether after the existing bread was used, he had new miraculously at hand. The latter idea is indeed compatible with the theory of a creative miracle, but there is no support for it in the text itself, since that apparently leads only to the first conception, which is a really monstrous one.

Dr. Weiss, accordingly, suggests as the real solution—

That his power over the mind of all who had any provision with them, moved them to hand it over to him who was ready to be their host: or else that particularly among those who were already prepared for the Passover journey to Jerusalem, there were not a few still supplied with bread and fish. If so much was really collected that there was more than enough for the wants of all, we have here a series of divine dispensations which contributed to bring about a great result.

This explanation is substantially that of the older rationalism; it eliminates entirely the idea which the text itself implies in a futile endeavour to supply a possible version of an actual event. The interpretation of the story as a materialisation of the Teacher's ministry of the word, the 'bread of life,' through the confusion of a symbol with a fact, is far more in accordance with modes and tendencies of thought which have been already exemplified. It seems more probable, however, that the narrative is due to the blending of various imaginative impulses, in which suggestions from different sources working, it may be, on some actual reminiscence, have been moulded together into one whole. The Old Testament already supplied its counterparts. Had not God, through Moses, fed Israel in the

wilderness day by day for a whole generation? Did not Elijah multiply the widow's oil? Did not Elisha, in famine time, make twenty barley loaves suffice for a hundred of the sons of the prophets, so that 'they did eat and leave thereof'? How much more, then, should Messiah give bread to the hungry, and still take up baskets full![1] Such examples, however, needed some closer connection with the actual work of Jesus, to have much real share in calling forth a corresponding incident. Is there any evidence which may link this story to some thought or usage derived from him? The Fourth Gospel appends to it a discourse on the bread of life, vi. 26-58, on eating the flesh of the Son of Man and drinking his blood, which has been commonly understood to refer to the doctrine of the Eucharist or Thanksgiving at the Lord's Supper. Would this application have been made if the narrative contained nothing to suggest it? Seeing what use was made by the Apostle Paul of the most remote analogies, we cannot affirm that the Fourth Evangelist must have already found the idea in the event. But it is quite possible that he simply expands and elaborates a meaning which it already contained. We know that in the early Church the Lord's Supper was celebrated at a common meal, which was preceded often, if not always, by worship and teaching. The brethren brought their bread, wine, and fish; in later days the

[1] Buddhist tradition ascribed a similar miracle to the Buddha. Out of a basket of cakes, prepared by an old woman for herself and her husband, he fed five hundred brethren in the monastery in the Jeta grove, and there was enough left over for all the scrap-eaters, and even when they had finished, the store showed no sign of being exhausted.—*The Jātaka*, vol i.; translated by Chalmers p. 197.

wealthier faithful added meat, poultry, cheese, and honey. They sat in order at tables, and at some period in the meal a loaf was blessed and broken by the president, and a cup sent round as the 'cup of blessing.' These were distributed by the deacons. So Jesus had blessed and broken bread as he sat at supper on the last night with his disciples. Was that the only time? inquired imagination. Gradually the Church conceived the picture of its own usage in the wilderness. There, too, the brethren had heard the word. There, too, in the Teacher's presence, they had 'sat down' as at tables in orderly array. There, too, had been brought the simple gifts of bread and fish. There, too, the blessing or thanksgiving had been offered, *Mark* vi. 41, viii. 7, the loaf had been broken, and the food carried round. Thus had Messiah sanctioned the Church's feast of love. If this be so,[1] the story has a practical significance. Under the veil of poetry or allegory, it finds for the religious and social customs of a later day a point of contact with the life of Christ.

§ 6. Growth of Religious Legend.

The causes which generate miraculous narratives round great Teachers are manifold and complex. Most surprising, perhaps, is the speed with which they work. In an age where all classes received with the greatest eagerness the most diverse kinds of supernatural tales, where every sort of magical wonder found ready belief, the lapse of a generation affords ample time for the growth of pious marvels. The instances which have been already offered from the legends of Plato and

[1] This explanation is derived from Dr. Pfleiderer.

Augustus, show how quickly ideas were invested with narratives to match. One or two modern instances may supply additional illustrations.

(1) The journals and correspondence of Wesley, in the first half of the year 1739, relate an outbreak of violent demonstrations at the meetings of the Society for Scripture-exposition and prayer. Loud cries, paroxysms of anguish, convulsions, all seemed to indicate that the sufferers were possessed by evil spirits. They even occurred in the street; they seized upon people in their own homes. Wesley regarded them as the work of the devil, which could only be overcome by the divine work of grace. 'We continued in prayer till past eleven,' he wrote, describing the cases of two young women, 'when God in a moment spoke peace to the soul, first of the first tormented, and then of the other, and they both joined in singing praises to him who had stilled the enemy and the avenger.' After the next summons we read in due course, 'All her pangs ceased in a moment. She was filled with peace, and knew that the son of wickedness had departed from her.' Let such scenes occur among the uneducated, unchecked by Wesley's strong sense or the need of contemporary record; let the idea of supernatural guidance—whether, as with Wesley, by Biblical divination and the lot, or by other means—enter at all points, and the elements for a religious legend are at once at hand.

(2) Contemporary with Wesley in the East of Europe was Israel Baal-Shem ('Lord of the Name') founder of the remarkable community among the modern Jews known as the 'Chassidim' (or the 'Pious'). They are now spread through Wallachia, Roumania, Galicia, and

South Russia, and are believed to number more than half a million. Israel was born about the year 1700 in the village of Bukovina, then belonging to Roumania. He was early devoted to the study of the Law, over which he attained such mastery that while still quite young he was known for the learning and impartiality with which he gave decisions in disputes. His knowledge secured for him, in spite of his poverty, the daughter of an eminent Rabbi in marriage; together they endured hardship and privation; he dug lime in the ravines among the Carpathian mountains, and she conveyed it for sale to the nearest town. By and by his wife was established by her brother in a remote village inn; and Israel spent most of his time in meditation in the adjoining forest. There he gathered a few chosen disciples round him; and with their help he devoted the last twenty years of his life to spreading his views through Wallachia. In the year 1761 he died. His teaching sought to show that religion really consisted in a personal relation between the soul and its Maker; and he threw the whole force of his nature into opposition to the legalism and casuistry of the Rabbis. Faith in God, love towards men, these were his watchwords. Israel wrote nothing: but his disciples began to collect his sayings, and about 1780 a vigorous Chassidic literature was started, which has since become tolerably extensive. It was founded on a compilation by his son-in-law, entitled 'the Praises of Israel Baal-Shem,' which was not printed till the year 1814. In this work the legend of Baal-Shem is already complete. His birth was announced to his father Rabbi Eliezer by the prophet Elijah. Eliezer and his wife, who was already a hundred

years old, were childless; but they were told that she should bear a son, who should be called Israel, for he should enlighten the eyes of all Israel, and in him should the Scripture be fulfilled, 'Thou art my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.' Even as a boy, he overcame Satan, who appeared as a were-wolf to frighten him, when he conducted the children younger than himself to the Synagogue. When he grew up, he cast demons out of men and animals; he made the lame dance and the blind see; the sick were healed, and the dead were raised. The 'Praises' are full of these stories. He cures a noble lady whose hands are withered. He gives a son to a childless pair; the boy dies, and he brings him back to life. Alone in the forest on a winter night, he has but to touch a tree with his finger-tips, and flames burst forth. When he desires to cross a stream, he spreads forth his mantle upon the waters, and, standing upon it, passes safely to the other side. His spirit even wanders through the angelic spheres; and he obtains access to Paradise for millions of pining souls who have waited without for thousands of mournful years.[1]

Thus can modern Judaism still invest one of its teachers with a robe of wonder. It has not been woven from deliberate fiction: it is the product of imagination brooding over ancient types, and pouring itself forth in reverence and love. Just as the feats of exorcism were prolonged in the Christian Church in the second century, so among the Chassidim at the present day, it is firmly believed that their ministers, the 'Tsaddiks,' continue to

[1] See *The Chassidim*, by S. Schechter, reprinted from the 'Jewish Chronicle.'

work marvels. There is no difficulty in separating Israel's teachings from his miracles. In the same way, while many of the Gospel narratives express with undying beauty the impression made by the personality of Jesus, it will be found that his religion is not involved in the stories of his mighty works. These cannot all be separately explained; it is not possible to determine the precise nature of each cure, or to be certain that the right key of prophecy and symbol, of parable and allegory, has been applied. But it is possible to account for their growth as a class. They cannot be distinguished from narratives of the same kind which have arisen in other places and at other times. In form and feature they may bear a loftier stamp; but their origin is due to the same tendencies in the human mind; they correspond to the same stage in the education of the race. [1]

[1] The myth-making tendency is not extinct even in modern Europe. An article by Dr. Mannhardt, in *Mélusine*, vol. i. 1878, p. 567, gives some curious details of the legend of Garibaldi as a religious hero. In 1848, medals, bearing his portrait, were worn as amulets, and at Parma sick children were brought to him, that he might lay his hands on them and heal them. The Lombards affirmed that during the campaign of 1859, night after night, especially on the eve of an engagement, the mysterious figure of a white lady visited the general in his tent or in the forest solitude: it was the spirit of his mother, bringing him counsel from another world. And a Calabrian peasant related that when Garibaldi and his men were terribly exhausted after a long day's march among the mountains by heat and thirst, he fired a cannon against a rock, and a stream of pure fresh water immediately burst forth. In the story of the Persian teacher known as the Báb executed in 1850, the growth of miracle may be seen in actual process with great rapidity. Cp. the *Tárikh-i-Jadid* (or *The New History*) translated by Prof. Edward G. Browne; and *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 361.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO S. MARK.

WHICH of our Gospels was written first? Were they originally composed as we now have them, or did earlier and simpler documents precede them, out of which our longer books have grown? How is it that in some passages, few, indeed, and brief, they agree almost word for word; and how is it that in others they differ so much? If they are all reporting the same teachings and relating the same events, why do not the discourses and the narratives come out the same? Some general answers to these questions have been already indicated in the discussion of the influences affecting the apostolic traditions about Jesus. But we have now to examine our First Three Gospels separately, and try to ascertain the circumstances under which they successively took their present shape.

§ 1. The Relations of the First Three Gospels.

(1) When we first hear of our Gospels by name, they are mentioned in the order in which they now stand in our New Testament.[1] Why they were placed in this

[1] See Introduction, p. 2.

order we cannot determine with certainty. It probably represents an early belief about their origin and their relation to apostolic sources. Matthew, it was supposed, came direct from an apostle's pen. Mark represented the recollections of another apostle, Peter, recorded by a disciple, and so removed a stage from actual apostolic authorship. Luke, again, issued from a wider range of investigation, and implied a comparison of various forms of the tradition. It stood, therefore, latest among the three.

Modern inquiry, however, has not been satisfied with this simple account of the relations of our First Three Gospels. The study of their resemblances and differences has raised a large number of intricate and perplexing questions. Enormous labour has been expended, and the most complicated schemes have been devised, in the endeavour to solve these difficulties. Every conceivable order has been advocated. Each gospel has been in turn placed first, second, or third; it has been supposed that they were all written independently, or that the later works were founded on the earlier; and they have been assigned to every sort of date during the hundred years from the missionary activity of the Apostles to their recognition by the Church in the second half of the second century.

All these solutions cannot possibly be correct, and it may be that none of them is. The materials at our command may be too scanty, our information too imperfect, to enable us to arrive at any very definite results. But the discussion has not been without value. It has brought into clear prominence certain important facts. Firstly, all Three Gospels contain numerous

common elements. Not only do they all alike view the Ministry of Jesus in the same general way, and narrate the same incidents, such as the Baptism, the mission of the Twelve, the last Supper, but they sometimes report the sayings of Jesus in almost verbal harmony. The mutual agreement of the Synoptics is the first and most obvious fact. Secondly, each gospel is marked by distinct peculiarities of its own. Each gospel includes some sayings or incidents recorded nowhere else, sometimes of a highly significant character. Each gospel reproduces certain sayings noted by all in special forms exclusively its own. And each gospel, while conforming to a common type, presents divergences of order and arrangement which often bear the appearance of deliberate design. These two groups of resemblances and differences run through the First Three Gospels from beginning to end, and any attempt to explain the relations of these gospels must deal with them.

(2) It is naturally more easy to account for the resemblances than the differences. The traditions which gathered up the memory of the Master's words and deeds, supplied the original material for the Gospel narratives. The incisive sayings, the parables, the crises of the Teacher's career—these were stamped deep on recollection; and served as the nucleus around which fresh incidents and utterances might be grouped. In due time these were arranged in a more or less definite order, and thrown into little collections of illustrative anecdote. The causes which might tend to modify them on the way have been already mentioned; and the work of imagination continued long after the earliest elements of the Gospel story were reduced to writing. Now a

comparison of the First Three Gospels soon reveals that behind some of their narratives and discourses there lies a common source. Sometimes there is a nearly verbal agreement between all three for several verses. Sometimes two run close together, while the third takes another course apart. Now our Gospels are written in Greek, while Jesus taught in Aramean.[1] If the compilers of our Gospels had been translating independently from an Aramean source, it is not likely that they would have each used the same words in the same order, especially where we find Greek words or idioms of a peculiar kind. Their translations would have varied in the arrangement and choice of their words, just as two translations which have come down to us of the Book of Daniel into Greek vary, or as different versions of the New Testament by different English scholars vary. This derivation from a prior Greek form is proved beyond doubt by the triple occurrence of the same misquotation from the Hebrew Scriptures.[2] Had the Gospel writers taken the passage from the original separately, they would not all have made the same mistake. We may assume, then (1) that the general resemblances are due to the fact that the First Three Gospels all deal with the same kind of subject-matter, drawn ultimately from the apostolic traditions; and (2) that the verbal coincidences are due to one of two causes—either the Gospel which was produced first was employed by the authors of the other two, or all

[1] This is the name given to the vernacular of Palestine, which had gradually replaced the ancient Hebrew. A few of the actual words of Jesus are reported in this tongue, cp. below, § 4, 2.

[2] See chap. i., § 4, 2, pp. 39, 40, *note* 1.

three Gospels were based upon some common Greek sources. This latter view seems best to meet the conditions of the case. Whether these common sources were still unfixed in writing, and were only passed from one to another in oral teaching, or whether they had already been invested with some primitive literary form, is open to question. It is perhaps more important to enquire which of our present Gospels seems to stand nearest to them in order of time. The answer which is given with increasing clearness and decision by scholars approaching the problem along very different lines, finds the earliest of our Three in 'the Gospel according to S. Mark.'

§ 2. The Priority of Mark.

In attempting to ascertain the relation of Mark to Matthew and Luke, we might first of all call up the witnesses of the Church in the second century, and ask what was the opinion of their time. But it will soon be seen that the testimony of ecclesiastical tradition is of less importance than the comparison of the Gospels among themselves. All theories of their relations, whether old or new, must give way before the facts.

(1) For example, it was readily observed that Mark is distinguished among the Synoptical Gospels by the large proportion of material belonging also to the other two, together or separately. That which is peculiar to Mark alone may all be packed in some twenty-eight or thirty verses. Only here and there do we alight on parable or story unrepresented in Matthew or Luke, such as the parable of the husbandman and the seed iv. 26-29, or

the cures of the deaf man with an impediment in his speech, vii. 32-36, and the blind man, viii. 22-26. It was accordingly supposed that our Second Gospel was simply a compilation from the First and Third. The advocates of this view could not explain for what end such a compilation was made, or why important passages—such as the Sermon on the Mount—should have been left out. But they did not realise what their theory required. It has been shown, for instance, by Dr. Abbott,[1] that the Greek of *Mark* xii. 1-11 contains all the words (save four which are unimportant) common to the parallel passages in *Matt.* xxi. 33-44 and *Luke* xx. 9-18. Now supposing Mark had been really borrowing from Matthew and Luke, imagine the process by which alone this result could have been brought about. The compiler must have put the two documents side by side, and noted the words belonging to both. Then he must have proceeded to write a narrative full of vigour and independent touches, which should embrace all the words already marked as common to the other two. A short instance of another kind in English will help to show the difficulty which such piece-work involves. Here are the directions given by Jesus to the two disciples sent to fetch the colt for his entry into Jerusalem:

Mark xi. 2-3.	*Matt.* xxi. 2-3.	*Luke* xix. 30-31.
Go your way into the village that is over against you, and straightway, as ye enter into it, ye shall find a colt tied,	Go into the village that is over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her; loose them, and	Go your way into the village over against you; in the which as ye enter ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever

[1] *Encylopædia Britannica*, article 'Gospels.'

whereon no man ever yet sat; loose him, and bring him. And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye, The Lord hath need of him, and straightway he will send him back hither.	bring them unto me. And if any one say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them, and straightway he will send them back.[1]	yet sat; loose him, and bring him. And if any one ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say, The Lord hath need of him.

The passage in Mark may be represented thus :—Let the ordinary type stand for Mark's own contribution, spaced type for what he borrows from Matthew, and italics for what comes from Luke.

Go your way into the village that is *over against you* and straightway *as ye enter* into it, *ye shall find a colt tied whereon no man ever yet sat: loose him and bring him.* And if any one say unto you, *Why* do *ye* this? say ye, *The Lord hath need of him*, and straightway he will send him back hither.

This case is rather different from Dr. Abbott's; it is an attempt to show the method by which, it is supposed, Mark's narratives have been sometimes built up. The epitomiser has endeavoured to combine the two stories, by taking a clause from one, and two words from the other, alternately. Can anything be more artificial? Dr. Abbott's remarks on the former case are equally applicable to this :

> The difficulty of doing this is enormous, and will be patent to any one who will try to perform a similar literary feat himself To embody *the whole* of even one document in a narrative of one's own without copying it *verbatim*, and to do this in a free.

[1] The Greek word here is the same as that translated 'send back' in Mark.

and natural manner, requires no little care; but to take two documents, to put them side by side and analyse their common matter, and then to write a narrative, graphic, abrupt, and in all respects the opposite of artificial, which shall contain every word that is common to both—this would be a *tour de force* even for a skilful literary forger of these days, and may be dismissed as an impossibility for the writer of the Second Gospel.

The kind of bald outline which would be produced by the process of epitomising may be seen in the last twelve verses appended to the Gospel by some later hand. How meagre is the reference, for example, in *Mark* xvi. 12-13, to the afternoon walk of Cleopas and his friend to Emmaus! How scanty is the brief allusion to the ascension, xvi. 19! The difference in style becomes at once apparent, and supplies proof enough that the Gospel which precedes was no mere compound or abstract from two larger works, but an original production on independent ground.

(2) If Mark, then, was not put together out of Matthew and Luke, is there any literary evidence as to the order of their composition? What place does it hold in comparison with the other two? This must be determined, in part at least, by general considerations. For example, a number of elements have been already pointed out implying later or more developed forms in the Third Gospel. It is in Luke that we find the descent of the spirit in bodily shape like a dove at the Baptism.[1] It is in Luke that the saying of Jesus 'I will make you fishers of men' gives occasion to an illustrative or allegorical miracle, the draught of fishes.[2] It is in Luke that the return of Messiah—once awaited with such

[1] See chap. iii. § 2, 1, p. 117. [2] See chap. iv. § 5, 1, p. 163

eagerness—is obviously postponed.[1] We may infer provisionally at any rate, that Mark, in which these things are not related, took shape first. The relationship to Matthew is at first more difficult to decide. This Gospel contains so many indications of great originality and of early date, that we are tempted at the outset to give it the first place in time which it has in our Testament. But the examination of its contents proves that these older elements are at present combined in very artificial forms. There are groups of sayings constituting small collections, like the Sermon on the Mount, v.-vii., the sequence of parables in xiii., the series of denunciations hurled against the Scribes and Pharisees in xxiii. Interlaced with these are corresponding groups of incidents, sets of miracles, arranged with certain obvious numerical adjustments. These have an undoubted air of later adaptation.[2] Now none of the First Three Gospels have disposed their contents in precisely the same order. But it may be said broadly that if Mark's order be put in the middle, with Matthew and Luke on either side, it will serve as a standard of comparison explaining them both. The divergences of each can be referred to this as the original type. If this be so, Mark must have preceded the other two.

(3) This may be seen on a larger scale in Mark's general division of the career of Jesus into two main sections (1) his work as a Teacher in Galilee, i.–ix., and (2) his journey, and the last days in Jerusalem, x.–xvi. It may also be traced in detail through the record of the northern ministry, up to the question of Jesus at

[1] Cp. xxi. 9, 24, xviii. 6-8, xvii. 22.

[2] On this subject more details will be found in chap. vii. § 1, 2, 3.

Caesarea Philippi. It must suffice, however, to point now to the more historical character of Mark's narrative in its general delineation of the position assumed by Jesus in relation to the Messiahship, when compared with Matthew. This is in fact indicated at the outset in the two narratives of the Baptism. The utterance of the heavenly voice, according to *Mark* i. 11, is addressed to Jesus only: in *Matt.* iii. 17 it is an attestation of his function in the third person, intended as a public designation of him as Messiah. This has important consequences on the subsequent representation. Mark's account is much simpler; the distinctively Messianic elements lie in the back-ground, and are emphasised only by the powers of evil. The temptations of Messiah are not specified. The description of his preaching, i. 39, confines his fame to Galilee: whereas Matthew even at the opening brings together a vast multitude of people from North to South, from 'Syria' to Judæa, iv. 24, 25. Immediately after this, Matthew places the great discourse upon the Mount. It is in fact the charter of the kingdom. It is to be for the new dispensation what the legislation of Sinai had been for the old; and Messiah takes the place of Moses as the giver of the new law. Towards the close, a noteworthy passage (which has no counterpart in the discourse in *Luke* vi.) displays Jesus in the attitude of Messianic judge, deciding who shall enter the kingdom of heaven, vii. 22, 23:

> Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out devils, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work inquity.

It is not by accident that these last words 'Depart from me' coincide with the sentence with which the Son of Man, seated on the throne of his glory, dismisses the condemned to their doom on the judgment day, xxv. 41. They imply a fully developed Messianic consciousness; they describe Jesus as having unhesitatingly advanced this claim from the first. On the other hand, Mark has preserved many traits which clearly contradict this view. The Jesus of our Second Gospel asserts no such right. Even when his character is discovered by the demoniacs, they are again and again charged not to make him known, e.g. i. 34, iii. 11, 12, passages which Matthew abbreviates; and though some echo of the prohibition still remains in his pages, e.g. xii. 16, in other cases, as *Mark* v. 43, vii. 36, it is omitted altogether. The statements of Mark are an endeavour to harmonise the traditional notion of the Teacher as Messiah with the fact that during the first part of his ministry he nowhere assumed that function. The discourse to the apostles in *Matt.* x., bears many marks of the Messianic conception, but in the brief report of their mission in *Mark* vi. 7–13, these have no place. Finally, at Caesarea Philippi when Jesus puts the decisive question 'Whom say ye that I am,' the silence imposed on the disciples after Peter's recognition of him as Messiah proves clearly that the name was then conferred upon him by his followers for the first time. Neither they, in his inner circle, nor the people who had followed him from place to place, had so regarded him before. But in Matthew's narrative he had been hailed as 'Son of David' by the blind men at the way-side, ix. 27: after the cure of a demoniac the multitudes cried, 'Is this the Son of David,' xii. 23;

even the Syro-Phœnician woman appeals to him by the same title, xv. 22. Popular support, then, was not wanting, and there was no need for him to enquire of the Twelve what men said of him. Still less was it necessary for him to ask what *they* thought. Had they not already done homage to him when he walked across the waters and went up into their boat, xiv. 33, saying 'Of a truth thou art the Son of God'? Why did no word of blessing fall at that moment from Messiah's lips like that which afterwards greeted the utterance of Peter's faith, xvi. 17? In Matthew, then, there is no real development in the ministry of Jesus. The end is assumed at the beginning. He asserts at the outset the rights which only the future will realize.[1] But in Mark, the preacher who begins by announcing that the kingdom of God is at hand is forced by degrees to consider his relation to it. So far from claiming the Messianic function at the opening of his career, he only slowly realizes it; and even when he finally accepts it, he resolutely refuses to make it known, viii. 30. This representation appears to be far more in accordance with historical probability—outward and inward—than that of Matthew. It is not likely that Jesus would have been long allowed to proclaim the royal dignity which the assumption of the Messianic character involved in the eyes both of the people, and of their Roman over-lords. Nor does it seem consistent with his early teaching about the kingdom that he should have taken up at the outset any sort of official connection

[1] This is also the view of the Fourth Evangelist, e.g. *John* i. 41, 42, 49, 50; iv. 26, &c. Reasons have been already briefly given for not accepting these details as historical. See Introduction, pp. 7-9.

with it. The title which he at length accepted, was rather thrust upon him by circumstance than deliberately chosen. It was adopted with reluctance, and an anxious avoidance of publicity; it involved so much which he could not share; it failed to express so much that he desired; yet no other designation spoke in the same way either to his own soul, or to the heart of his time. But if this be the significance of Mark's narrative, is it not clearly older than that of Matthew?

(4) This conclusion, however, by no means shuts out the possibility that Matthew may in many instances have more nearly preserved the earlier form of the Teacher's sayings. It is quite conceivable that many elements in Matthew's gospel may be of high relative antiquity, though the narrative in which they now lie may be the latest of our Three. When the traditions were first formed, their core was constituted out of the Master's words; and if the later belief of the Church, that Matthew made a collection of his 'oracles,' be correct, it is not at all improbable that much of this may have been incorporated in the Gospel now bearing his name.[1] How subsequent influences might introduce minute changes may be seen from the following small group of passages. When Jesus first took up the work of the preacher in Galilee, his opening message, according to *Matt.* iv. 17, was identical in form—whatever may have been its difference in spirit—with that of John:—

> Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

But in *Mark* i. 15 it is amplified with new phrases:—

[1] See chap. vii. § 5, 3.

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand *repent ye and believe in the gospel.*

The fulfilment of the appointed time carries us into the thought of the Apostle Paul, comp. *Gal.* iv. 4; and the use of the term 'the Gospel,' as a summary of the teachings of Jesus, coupled with the demand for faith—not in God (xi. 22) but in it—warns us that we have here the language of the apostolic age.[1] This same touch meets us elsewhere:—

Mark viii. 35.
For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake *and the gospel's* shall save it.

Matt. xvi. 25.
For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it.

Luke ix. 24.
For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

Mark x. 29, 30.
Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or mother, or father, or children, or lands, for my sake, *and for the gospel's sake*, but he shall receive a hundred fold now in this time, houses and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, *with persecutions*, and in the age to come eternal life.

Matt. xix. 28, 29.
Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, . . . every one that hath left houses or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life.

Luke xviii. 29, 30.
And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or wife, or brethren, or parents, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life.

[1] cp. Introduction, p. 1.

In the last passage, a second addition, 'with persecutions,' again seems to betray the later hand of one who had, indeed, found anew in the hearts and homes of believers the dear relationships which he had himself surrendered, but who knew likewise at what price of danger and suffering they must be won.[1]

§ 3. The Representation of Jesus.

The earlier date of Mark's general narrative seems further confirmed by many features in its picture of the Teacher.

(1) It has been already shown that Mark really implies that Jesus did not assume the function of Messiah at the beginning of his ministry. Rightly interpreted, this account reveals the fact that there was a distinct growth in his feeling on the subject. It is quite true that the Evangelist represents him as marked out for that dignity at the Baptism. But it is observable, in comparison with the other two Gospels, that Mark apparently regards this as the moment when he was divinely appointed to that office. By the descent of the Spirit upon him did he become 'Son of God.' Up to that date he had been in no way distinguished from other men. Hence Mark has no story of the miraculous conception, or the wonders of the birth. Either he knew them and omitted them, not wishing, as has been surmised, to embarrass his narrative with disputable matter; or they were not yet circulated in the community for which he wrote.

[1] *Mark* ix. 38-41, breaking the connection of vv. 37, 42, seems to have been added from some other source, comp. *Luke* ix. 49-50. The reference in ver. 41 to the Christian name again seems a mark of the time when it had come into use.

(2) The many touches implying some limitations in the Teacher's power and knowledge, confirm the view that when our Second Gospel was written the title 'Son of God' had not yet been translated into a story of physical parentage. In spite of his control over outward nature, he is not omnipotent: in spite of his endowment with the spirit, he is not omniscient. On the evening of the first day of preaching in Capernaum, when 'all the city was gathered together at the door,' bringing their sufferers from possession and disease, he 'healed *all* that were sick,' says Matthew, viii. 16; 'he laid his hands on *every one* of them,' affirms Luke, iv. 40, with still greater emphasis, 'and healed them.' But Mark, more guardedly, simply says, i. 34, 'he healed *many*.' Were there, then, some obstinate cases which baffled his power? Certainly that is the Evangelist's explanation of the failure at Nazareth, vi. 5-6 :—

> And he *could there do no mighty work*, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

Later reverence for Messiah would not admit this inability; and Matthew hints—though the passage will bear a double meaning—that the men of Nazareth saw no great wonders at the prophet's hands, in punishment for their faithlessness, xiii. 58 :—

> And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

When the twelve are sent forth to preach, Mark simply describes them as invested with 'authority to cast out devils,' iii. 15; but Matthew, enlarging the scope of their power, adds 'and to heal all manner of disease

and all manner of sickness,' x. 1. In the story of the fig-tree[1] a comparison of Matthew with Mark shows how Matthew palpably heightens the wonder. Mark, after recording the doom pronounced by Jesus, simply adds 'and his disciples heard it,' xi. 14 Not till the next day, xi. 20, on their way into the city from Bethany, do they discover that the fig-tree has withered. But in Matthew the tree shrivels before their eyes, and the astonished disciples proceed to ask how it happened, xxi. 19-20. In a similar way the knowledge as well as the power of Messiah is on a somewhat lower range in the Second Gospel, for we read in *Mark* xiii. 32 :—

> Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.[2]

Luke escapes the difficulty by omitting the passage altogether. In *Matt.* xxiv. 36, the reading varies: if the words originally stood there, they were early found to be out of harmony with the feeling of the Church, and some scribe silently omitted them. One other difficulty was solved by the same method. The oldest tradition preserved clear traces of the fact that the family of Jesus had not understood him, nay, they actually regarded him as mad, and purposed to put him under restraint. Even

[1] See chap. iv. § 4, 1, p. 156.

[2] In this remarkable passage 'the Son,' who is clearly placed above men and angels, though inferior to 'the Father,' seems to be different both from the 'Son of man,' and from the human Jesus, who nowhere else so designates himself in Mark. Comp., however, *Luke* x. 22, *Matt.* xi. 27. In the related pair 'the Son,' 'the Father,' may we not trace the influence of Pauline thought?

his mother joined his brothers in this plan. As he sits in the house at Capernaum, the message is brought to him through the crowd, 'Behold thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.' All Three Evangelists relate the incident, *Mark* iii. 31-32; *Matt.* xii. 46-47; *Luke* viii. 19-20, but Mark alone explains its cause, iii. 20-21:—

> And he cometh into a house, And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. And when his friends heard it, *they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.*

The brothers of Jesus might have been excused such want of comprehension; but how, it was asked, could the mother who knew the secret of his birth have so failed to read its lessons? The purpose attributed to her was in too violent conflict with the later reverence for Mary as well as for Christ to hold its ground; Matthew and Luke, therefore, quietly pass it by.

(3) Our Second Gospel further abounds in traits implying the rich and full humanity of Jesus, from the time when he first summons Simon and Andrew to follow him, promising to make them 'fishers of men.' The following instances are all peculiar to Mark. At the very opening of his ministry, after the first day's labour in Capernaum, he seeks in silence and retirement the divine support without which all his toil would be of no avail, i. 35:—

> And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, *and there prayed.*

With a simple principle of the broadest application for human service, he cuts through the legal tradition of the Rabbis, ii. 27:—

The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

The persistent and inhuman narrowness of his opponents stirs his wrath even in the synagogue, iii. 5 :—

And when he had looked round about on them *with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their heart*, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand.

Wearied with teaching, as the boat crosses the lake, he falls asleep, while the storm rages round him, till his impatient followers awake him with reproach for his indifference to their peril, iv. 38 :—

And he himself was *in the stern*, asleep *on the cushion ;* and they awake him, and say unto him, Teacher, *carest thou not* that we perish ?

Yet he is full of tenderness for their needs ; and when, after their return from missionary toil, they are well nigh overpowered by the crowds around the Master, he is the first to lead the way into retreat and peace, vi. 31 :—

And he saith to them, *Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leêsure so much as to eat.*

When the Pharisees try him with their demand for a sign, he cannot repress some bitterness of heart, viii. 12 :—

And he *sighed deeply in his spirit*, and saith, Why doth this generation seek a sign ? Verily I say unto you, There shall be no sign given to this generation.

The rebuke of the disciples who would keep the children from him, that he might be shielded from their importunities, draws down on them a rebuke of another kind, x. 14 :—

When Jesus saw it, *he was moved with indignation*, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me; forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.

With the quick eye of affection, he discerns in the rich young man, who asked what he must do to inherit eternal life, the possibility of the highest, X. 21 :—

And Jesus, *looking upon him, loved him*, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest.

So, too, the Scribe who has approved the selection of commandments to which Jesus has given the first and second places in the code of the kingdom, wins the Teacher's sympathetic commendation, xii. 34 :—

When Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.

It is noteworthy that the terms 'law' and 'lawyer' never once occur in the whole Gospel, still less is there any assertion of the binding character of all Mosaic ordinances. The Pharisaic tradition is set aside in contrast with the commandment of God; and the life of the heart is lifted above all external ordinance and usage. The Gospel is not so much a biography, deliberately planned, and intended to present its subject under a particular aspect, as it is a collection of anecdotes strung more or less skilfully on to a thread of narrative, in which the incidents follow with an artless simplicity, and the crises are marked with the force of natural development. In short, the Jesus of Mark is a man, with a man's wrath and disappointment. He cannot do everything, he does not know everything. But he is the founder of a 'new teaching,' in virtue of which the troubled and restless in body and mind come to him and

are healed. He proclaims the rule of God in the world, received and stablished in the heart of man. In the innocence and unconsciousness of childhood he finds the nearest approach to the realisation of this rule. Child-like obedience to God, and brotherly love towards men, are the two great ideas with which he will win over the sinful and regenerate the world. Difficulty cannot over-power him, or danger daunt, or opposition suppress him. He may perish, but his cause is eternal. The kingdom will triumph! the Son of Man will come!

§ 4. Traits of Authorship and Date.

Assuming, now, that Mark was the first of our Synoptical Gospels to take permanent literary shape, can we find in it any marks throwing light on the character of the author or his readers, or the place and time of its composition?

(1) The various graphic touches which distinguish this Gospel have been often observed by students, The little series of descriptions of the feelings and demeanour of Jesus already presented [1] might seem to proceed from the recollection of some disciple who cherished the memory of his very look and tone. The succession of incidents marking the first Sabbath at Capernaum—a succession which Matthew ruthlessly breaks up—has all the air of the reminiscence of an eye-witness. Trifling details are scattered across the page which vanish from the other narratives. There is the 'little boat' which he arranges 'to wait on him because of the crowd,' iii. 9. In taking refuge in

[1] See above, § 3, 3, p. 190.

Phœnicia, he 'would have no man know' where he is; but, remarks the narrator simply, vii. 24, 'he could not be hid.' When he sends for the colt to ride in to Jerusalem, it is noted that the disciples found it 'tied at the door without in the open street,' xi. 4. No other Evangelist recalls that when the money-changers were driven from the temple, Jesus would not even suffer any man to carry a vessel through the courts, xi. 16. This Gospel alone describes Peter on the fatal night, as seated 'with the officers' in the court of the high priest, and 'warming himself in the light of the fire,' xiv. 54; and while Matthew uses the name Peter freely before recording how it was bestowed, Mark carefully adheres to the Jewish Simon till he mentions, iii. 16, that in appointing him one of the Twelve to be with him, Jesus surnamed him Peter. Only Mark identifies Simon of Cyrene, who was compelled to bear the cross for Jesus, as the father of Alexander and Rufus, xv. 21. Who were these two persons? Why should they be named? They must have been known in the community for whom the Gospel was written, and the author must have supposed it would interest his readers to learn that their father had rendered such service to the dying Lord. Rufus is a Latin name. Is it unreasonable to connect it with the Church at Rome, *Rom.* xvi. 13?

(2) If we may believe that some of the freshness of personal observation which many have found in this Gospel, is due to the remembrance of one of the Master's followers, it becomes easy to understand how the writer should be familiar with the actual speech of Palestine. He alone reports the very words of Jesus, as by the couch of the daughter of Jairus, '*Talitha cumi*,'

v. 41; or '*Ephphatha*' addressed to the deaf and dumb man, vii. 34; or '*Abba*, Father,' in Gethsemane, xiv. 36. He alone mentions that Jesus surnamed James and John 'Boanerges, which is, Sons of thunder,' iii. 17. But these phrases, be it noted, are all carefully interpreted. In this narrative only do we find names and customs explained, such as Corban, vii. 11; Bartimæus, x. 46; the Preparation, xv. 42; the washing of hands and vessels, vii. 3, 4. All this implies that the circle of readers for whom the Gospel was designed was far from the original scene of its events. Those who needed such explanations could not have themselves been resident in Palestine; nay, probably, they were not Jews at all, they were Gentile Christians to whom Jewish usages were strange. That will account for a circumstance already mentioned, the absence of the term 'law,' and of any discussions about its validity. And the same reason shows us why the applications of prophecy should be proportionately few. They were not of the same interest to those who did not know the Hebrew Scriptures.

(3) The evidence which thus points us to a Jewish author, writing for Gentiles at a distance from his native land, is confirmed by some peculiarities in the language of the Gospel. It is Greek; but it is not Greek of the literary and polished style which the author of our Third Gospel was well able to employ. It contains sometimes Greek words of a low sort, such as might be heard in the mongrel talk of the slaves or poor freedmen who formed the first congregations in the great cities of the Mediterranean, and especially at Rome. Noteworthy is it, also, that in the parallel passages of Matthew and Luke other

words are sometimes found. This is in itself an indication of advancing date; the Gospel stories must be fitted to ears that would not relish these ignoble terms; but no writer would mar his composition by the deliberate substitution of coarse words for refined. Moreover, in addition to Latin names, like *census*, *centurion*, or *praetorium*, brought by the Roman government to Palestine, and occurring elsewhere in the New Testament, peculiar Latin idioms, rendered direct into Greek suggest a western origin for the Gospel. And a curious little piece of evidence helps to confirm this view. The words ascribed to Jesus in X. 11, 12, forbidding re-marriage after divorce, imply that the wife might herself seek the separation. But this was not permitted to the Jewish woman, and the Teacher's language would refer to a case impossible among his countrymen. It was, however, allowed by the Roman law; and it would seem likely, therefore, that the principle of Jesus has been extended under the influence of Latin custom.[1] Here is another link connecting this Gospel with Rome.

(4) Few indications point distinctly to any time. The most decisive are those in chap. xiii. This long discourse, unlike any other in Mark, for amplitude and continuity, presents many peculiar features. It finds a close parallel in *Matt.* xxiv., though the passage in *Mark* xiii. 9-13, describing the dangers that will beset the

[1] Such an extension would be quite natural in a different social environment, without conscious effort to accommodate the Master's teaching to an alien law, and it might be reinforced by the conviction that the higher morality of the kingdom of God held up the same standard of conduct for both men and women alike.

faithful is practically identical not with *Matt.* xxiv. 9-14, but with *Matt.* x. 17-22, where it is addressed to the Twelve on their first mission. Luke handles similar materials even more freely, and the peculiarities of repetition, combination, and distribution, shown by all three Evangelists, render it probable that original words of Jesus have been enlarged by the incorporation of other predictions. Mark's report seems, indeed, to mingle two independent themes, the future of the Christian community, and the social commotions and cosmic prodigies which will precede the end of the age:—

xiii. 5, 6, appearance of false Messiahs.	xiii. 7, 8, wars and earthquakes.
9-13, persecutions for preaching the Gospel.	14-20, tribulation in Judea.
21-23, fresh warnings against false Messiahs.	24-25, portents in heaven.
26-37, the coming of the Son of Man.	

The veiled words in 14, 'let him that readeth understand' (cp. *Matt.* xxiv. 15; *Luke* xxi. 20 recasts the whole passage), have been regarded by many critics as an indication that some written document, some little Apocalypse which circulated among the Christians before the fall of Jerusalem, has here been incorporated into genuine recollections of the Teacher's warnings.[1] Whether this be so or not, the speech has certainly received editorial amplifications. Thus, the anticipated tribulation in ver. 19 is already matter of retrospect in ver. 20; the terrors of the destruction of the temple and the fall of the city are over. The hope of the coming of the Son of Man is still vivid; but

[1] For another probable instance see chap. vii. § 3, *ib.*

the commotions which will herald the event are no longer expected 'immediately,' ver. 24, as in *Matt.* XXIV. 29. These conditions carry us at least to the year 70 A.D. If Alexander and Rufus, sons of Simon of Cyrene, were really alive when our author wrote, we should have further warrant for placing the Gospel about this date, in which the most eminent recent critics of diverse schools concur.[1]

§ 5. The Witness of Tradition.

The peculiarities of our Second Gospel have led us to ascribe it to some one *who had access to first-hand reminiscences of Jesus*, well acquainted with Palestine, its languages and usages, writing for Gentile readers, in an atmosphere where the Greek was not always of a literary type, and where Latin idioms and Roman law prevailed. What support is offered to these conclusions by the testimony of the Church?

(1) Our earliest information is derived from a passage in the writings of Papias[2] preserved by the historian Eusebius. The statements of Papias are founded on the information of the Elder, John, and are thus translated by Dr. Westcott:—

> This also the Elder used to say. Mark, having become Peter's interpreter, wrote accurately all that he [Mark] remembered (or all that he [Peter] mentioned), though he did not record in order that which was either said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord, nor followed him, but subsequently attached himself to Peter. who used to frame his teaching to meet the wants [of his hearers], but not as making a connected narrative

[1] See the table in the writer's lectures on *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 340.

[2] See Introduction, pp. 3-4.

of the Lord's discourses. So Mark committed no error, as he wrote down some particulars just as he recalled them to mind (or as he [Peter] narrated them). For he took heed to one thing, to omit none of the facts that he heard, and to make no false statement in his account of them.

The main things here stated are two-fold: (1) Mark's source of information lay in Peter's reminiscences; and (2) the words and deeds of Jesus were not related *in order*.

First of all, then, who was Mark, and how were he and Peter connected? The Book of Acts relates that his first name was John, and that his mother Mary lived at Jerusalem, where he doubtless first became acquainted with Peter, xii. 12. When Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch after bringing the contribution of the Church there to the poor brethren at Jerusalem, xi. 29, 30, they took Mark (who seems to have been cousin to Barnabas) with them, xii. 25. He started with them on their first missionary journey, but on their arrival at Perga in Pamphylia, he returned to Jerusalem, xiii. 13. To the Apostle Paul this sudden withdrawal seemed like an abandonment of the cause: and when Barnabas proposed that he should accompany them on their second journey, Paul objected so strongly, xv. 37-39, that it was found better for Barnabas to go alone with Mark to Cyprus. In later days, it would seem, the breach between them was healed. When Paul was a prisoner at Rome, Mark was among his few fellow-workers; he counts him among the men who 'have been a comfort' to him, *Col.* iv. 10, 11, *Philem.* 24. Whether Mark was associated with Peter also, in Rome, the New Testament does not enable us to determine. It has been supposed that Mark joined Peter, possibly on some journey to Asia Minor; and the

first Epistle ascribed to Peter, v. 13, mentions 'Mark, my son.' Was this John Mark? and was he son of Peter in the flesh or in the spirit? We cannot tell. The authorship of the Epistle and the meaning of the words are alike too uncertain. But at any rate it is consistent with this tradition that the first recorded act of the new Teacher should be the calling of Simon, i. 16; the cure of Simon's mother-in-law, when Jesus and his four disciples leave the synagogue, on the first sabbath in Capernaum, surely owes its place in the story to grateful remembrance; and when the Teacher has withdrawn before daybreak for solitary prayer, Simon leads the party of search, i. 36.[1]

Other testimony in the second century, however, beside that of Papias, shows a general belief that our Second Gospel was in some way linked with Peter. Justin the Martyr,[2] quoting the name Boanerges—which occurs only in Mark—seems to refer it to the Memoirs or Recollections of Peter. Irenæus[3] places the composition of the Gospel after Peter's death, the date of which, however, is not precisely known.[4]

> Since the decease of these [Peter and Paul], Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, himself also handed down to us in writing the things which were preached by Peter.

As the tradition goes on, it becomes more and more precise. Clement of Alexandria affirms that Mark wrote during Peter's lifetime, and the Apostle, when he was aware of this, took pains neither to hinder nor to

[1] Cp. further the change of name to Peter, iii. 16; and note the touches in xiv. 37, 54, 67-72.

[2] See Introduction, p. 2. [3] See Introduction, p. 2.

[4] Tradition assigns it to the persecution of Nero, 64 A.D.

encourage him in the work. Finally, Eusebius in the fourth century declares that Peter sanctioned the writing for the use of the Church by express revelation.

(2) Is our Gospel the work which Papias knew and referred to Mark? This has been variously decided according to the interpretation put upon the statement that the words and deeds of Jesus were not related *in order*. The study of our Mark reveals a very clear and intelligible order, preferable, indeed, to that of either Matthew or Luke.[1] It is possible that the phrase may apply to the divergence noticed by Papias between our existing Mark and the collection of 'the Lord's oracles' which he assigned to Matthew, and had just described before his account of the work of Mark. Beside such a collection the reminiscences gathered up in Mark might have seemed dislocated or defective. But there is another and more significant consideration.

Other elements must have been blended in our present narrative with the recollections of Peter. Small groups of anecdotes present themselves, not linked together by sequence in memory, but designed to show the attitude of Jesus under various circumstances of criticism and opposition; e.g. the succession of stories in ii.-iii. 6, where the two Sabbath stories in particular, ii. 23-iii. 6, are evidentiy put side by side on purpose to illustrate each other. Similarly, short series of sayings occur, in which it is difficult to trace any inner cohesion, such as iv. 21-25, xi. 23-25; they seem to stand where they are because their original occasion was no longer known, and the author had no better place for their record. In other

[1] See the previous discussion, § 2, 3, where the development of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus is briefly indicated.

cases the stories themselves are not of the character of first-hand reminiscence, such as the two versions of the feeding miracle, or the cursing of the fig-tree, or the solemn wonders of the transfiguration. These incidents owe their present form to tradition often repeated; they are far removed from the person of the Master and his immediate followers. The author of *Mark*, that is to say, gathered materials from more than one source, and the Gospel, as we have it, contains much more than Peter's recollections. This is obvious, for example, in its opening; where the brief report of the Baptist's preaching seems derived from the fuller narrative employed in both *Matthew* and *Luke*, cp. *Mark* i. 7-8, with *Matt.* iii. 11-12 and *Luke* iii. 16-17. It is plain, again, from the discourse in xiii., which bears emphatic marks of being dependent on an earlier written document (ver. 14). It is probable, once more, that the series of parables in iv., with the exposition of the various issues of the Sower's toil, is really due to some collection of the Teacher's words. By what process these were all brought together, whether Mark himself expanded Peter's fragmentary reminiscences into a complete sketch of Messiah's career, or whether some other hand worked up Mark's notes into our Gospel, cannot be definitely determined. But it is almost certain that the earliest form of continuous narrative subsequently received additions. Thus at the opening the insertion of i. 2 before the citation in ver. 3 from Is. xl. is probably due to an editorial hand in consequence of its application in *Matt.* xi. 10 and *Luke* vii. 27. The incident described in ix. 38-40 so obviously shatters the sequence of 33-37 and 41-47, cp. *Matt.* xviii. 1-10, that it has been widely regarded as a late insertion

founded on *Luke* ix. 49-50. The section vi. 45-viii. 22 has been sometimes regarded with suspicion, partly because the feeding of the four thousand, viii. 1-9, seems to be a duplicate of the previous miracle, vi. 35-44; and partly because Luke, who has hitherto reproduced nearly the whole of *Mark*, apparently ignores its contents, though the story of the Syro-Phœnician woman might have enlisted his special sympathy. Or, once more, the discourse against the Scribes about Beelzebub, iii. 22-30, plainly interrupts the narrative of the attempt made by the family of Jesus to secure his person on the ground that he was insane, 20-21 and 31-35. There is nothing in the occasion to give rise to it, resembling the cure which immediately precedes it in *Matt.* xii. 22-32 and *Luke* xi. 14-23; and it may be marked, therefore, as a harmoniser's insertion. Such cases point to the general view that the Gospels were not regarded as closed books. Different copies, as they were put into circulation, tended to incorporate fresh traditional material. An anecdote here, a saying there, which it was desired to preserve, would be lodged (perhaps inappropriately) in the text, and no difficulty was felt in thus placing incident, warning, or promise, under the sanction of a venerated name. In this way the earliest Gospel may have passed through several stages—we might almost call them 'editions' but for the artlessness of the process—before arriving at its present form.[1]

[1] For a parallel case in the religious history of Persia in the last twenty years among the Bábís, see *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 324-328. Prof. Browne has recently stated that, contrary to his expectation, he found the greatest confusion prevailing among the Bábís as to the origins and authorship of the books which record the beginnings of their faith.

(3) Mark had lived at Jerusalem; he had belonged to the inner circle of disciples there, who had made his mother's house their meeting-place. He must have doubtless heard again and again stories of the Master's life and teaching told and re-told, in the very centre where the traditions were first formed, and these might well mingle with his recollections of Peter's discourse. But Mark had also been in intimate relations with the apostle Paul; he had travelled with him, he had worked with him in Rome. The study of the Pauline theology has disclosed to some scrutinising eyes similarities of thought between the Second Gospel and the Epistles, which may be due to the special opportunities of personal intercourse, or may also be due to the larger effect of Paul's general conceptions upon that branch of the Church which was in contact with the Gentiles. The peculiar use of the term 'gospel' in Mark has been already noted; it is found also in the writings of Paul. In the emphasis laid again and again on faith, in the language concerning self-denial and the taking of the cross, in the story of the Transfiguration, in the announcement that the gospel must first be preached to all the Gentiles, xiii. 10, and proclaimed through the whole world, xiv. 9, which implies that the religion of Jesus was something more than a Judaism which had accepted him as Messiah, in the symbol of the Temple-veil rent at the death of Jesus, xv. 38, so that the sanctuary was flung open to all, cp. *Rom.* v. 1-2, *Ephes.* ii. 14, traces of Pauline influence, more or less definite or obscure, have been detected. These surmises cannot, however, be demonstrated; they may be established with some degree of likelihood; they cannot attain the rank of certainty.

How Peter's reminiscences were shaped into our *Mark* we cannot tell. The view of Irenaeus—that Mark did not write till after Peter's death—is quite consistent with the date to which the Gospel has been referred. But the statements of the second century must not be received with too absolute a confidence. At any rate, it remains probable that the main facts of our Second Gospel were derived from Peter; the baptism, the ministry in Capernaum and on the lake, the choice of the disciples, the enlarging work, the opposition and the conflict, the confession of Messiahship, the journey to Jerusalem, the entry into the capital, the last days of gathering danger, the fatal night of anguish and desertion—of all these he may have spoken. The leading outlines of the immortal story are drawn from the life. Here Jesus thinks, prays, feels, speaks, acts, as a man. No books in the world have ever wrought so great a change in human aspiration and endeavour as the Gospels. In reducing to writing the loose material of reminiscence and tradition, the author of the oldest Gospel gave shape and continuance to a new moral ideal. He secured for the Christian life the means of exerting its enduring and diffusive power. He set firm the foundation-stone of the Christian Church. We do well to inscribe upon it the names of the two greatest of the Apostles, Peter and Paul.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO S. LUKE.

THIS Gospel has always been felt to possess a peculiar significance for Christianity, for it contains so many unique elements which have entered into the very heart of our religion. Whatever may be their source and their historical value, as a spiritual interpretation of the principles of Jesus they have for us imperishable worth.

At the very outset we are struck by a new feature to which nothing in Mark or Matthew corresponds. The Third Gospel begins with a preface. This is in itself a mark of literary style: and it is, moreover, written in excellent Greek. What does it tell us concerning the sources of the work which it introduces?

> Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, delivered them unto us, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus: that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the words wherein thou wast instructed.

Several important facts may be inferred from these words. (1) There were already 'many' narratives in existence dealing with the life and teachings of Jesus. Whether our author intended to blame the writers (for we may presume that they were written) for rashness in undertaking the task, or for failure to accomplish it, is perhaps uncertain; it is clear that he is not satisfied with what they have done. Yet how thankful we should be if some of these early works had been preserved! (2) The compilers of these narratives were not themselves apostles. They could only deal with what they had themselves received; they arranged and handed on what was 'delivered' to them; they simply recorded a tradition. The sources of this tradition are not named. It is somewhat vaguely said to have proceeded from those who were eye-witnesses from the beginning (meaning apparently the baptism, *Acts* i. 21-22), but through how many intervening stages it had passed we are not told. (3) The writer was not himself one of these eye-witnesses; he has no other channel of information than his predecessors. He, too, depends on what has been 'delivered,' whether by the 'ministry of the word' or by writing. He stands, therefore, at an unnamed distance from the events which he is about to describe. But he claims for his narrative certain special merits. He has prepared himself by careful study to make it complete in its scope, exact in its details, and faithful in its arrangement. (4) The traditions which he thus embodies were already the subject of regular oral teaching. The English term 'things,' ver. 4, should rather (as the margin indicates) be rendered 'words'; denoting the portions of the 'word,' ver. 2, which were

imparted to the Christian disciple, cp. *Gal.* vi. 6, *Acts* xviii. 25.

Let us now enquire how far the Gospel really carries out the aim expressed in the Preface.

§ 1. Its Relation to Mark.

Was Mark among the narratives already composed, and are there any traces that it was among Luke's sources?

(1) There is, in the first place, a general harmony of arrangement and contents. Most of the materials of Mark find parallels in Luke. A few passages remain, as has been already observed,[1] unrepresented in either Luke or Matthew. Otherwise, the bulk of Mark's anecdotes appear likewise in Luke. One section, indeed, is entirely omitted by the Third Gospel, *Mark* vi. 45-viii. 26. It begins with the second Lake miracle, which Luke probably regarded as a variant of the first calming of the storm.[2] It records a discourse with the Pharisees on sitting down to eat with unwashed hands, vii. 1 foll. which Luke appears to present in another form, and on a different occasion, xi. 37 foll. It contains the story of the Syrophœnician woman, dealing with the question of the scope of the Gospel, which is one of the prominent themes of Luke's narrative, and is brought forward again and again elsewhere, with greater emphasis and a more decided breadth.[3] And it relates a second feeding miracle, which Luke's accuracy discerned to be a duplicate of the preceding, such as might easily spring up with slight variations of number or locality.[4] This is

[1] Chap. v. § 2, 1, p. 177.
[2] Chap. iv. § 4, 2, p. 160.
[3] See below, § 4, 5, p. 234.
[4] Comp. chap. iv. § 5, 2, p. 165.

followed by a demand from the Pharisees for a sign, and a warning from the Teacher against their leaven, which Luke reports in other connections, e.g. xi. 16, 29, 30, xii. 1. — With these exceptions the elements of Mark's narrative may be traced again in Luke. If this be so, may we say that Luke actually employed our Second Gospel? Two circumstances seem to make it highly probable that though he did not follow it closely, he still chose it as a kind of base for his own work.

(2) In many of the passages common to the Second and Third Gospels, the verbal agreement is very close. Sometimes the parallels are all but exact; sometimes little touches seem to have been added by Luke to enlarge or modify or explain his source. Compare, for instance, the following passages at the opening of the ministry in Capernaum, to which Matthew shows no parallel.

Mark i. 23-28.

And straightway *there was in* their *synagogue a man* with *an unclean spirit; and he cried out,* saying, *What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.* And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying with a loud voice, *came out* of *him.* And they were *all amazed,* insomuch that they questioned among themselves,

Luke iv. 33-37.

And in the *synagogue there was a man* which had *a spirit* of an *unclean* devil; *and he cried ou* with a loud voice, Ah! *what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.* And when the devil had thrown him down in the midst, he *came out* of *him,* having done him no hurt. And *amazement* came upon *all,* and they spake

saying, *What is* this? a new teaching! with *authority he commandeth* even *the unclean spirits*, and they obey him. And the report of him went out straightway everywhere, into all *the region* of Galilee *round about.*

together, one with another, saying, *What is* this word? for with *authority* and power he *commandeth the unclean spirits*, and they come out. And there went forth a rumour concerning him into every place of *the region round about.*

Here are two more taken from the last days at Jerusalem, the equivalents in Mark and Luke of the great invective in *Matt.* xxiii.

Mark xii. 38-40.

And in his teaching he said, Beware *of the Scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and* (to have) *salutations in the market-places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts;* they *which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation.*

Luke xx. 45-47.

And in the hearing of all the people he said unto his disciples, Beware *of the Scribes which desire to walk in long robes, and* love *salutations in the market-places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts, which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers; these shall receive greater condemnation.*

Both Gospels then relate in almost identical words the story of the widow's gift, which Matthew omits altogether.

(3) In the case just quoted, either Luke must have reproduced Mark's anecdotes, with such slight changes as he thought desirable (observe that words in direct speech appear in the closest agreement), or both Mark and Luke must have derived them from a common source. Which seems the more likely? The probability that Luke drew some of his material from Mark, is increased by this fact—the general order of Mark

reappears in Luke. It is occasionally dislocated, but the outlines of the Galilæan ministry, with its brief close in Jerusalem, are clearly reproduced. And where the arrangement of the Second Gospel is disturbed, the Third Gospel still seems to pre-suppose it. Thus, after the synagogue scene just quoted, we read :—

Mark i. 29.	*Luke* iv. 38.
And straightway, when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.	And he rose up from the synagogue, and entered the house of Simon.

The reader of Luke, asking himself 'Who was Simon?' finds no answer till the next chapter, v. 3, 10. Luke has transposed the account of the call of Simon, James and John, which Mark places before the synagogue-incident and the visit to Simon's house, to an indefinitely later period. The mention of Simon's name, therefore, is wholly unexpected, and no reason appears why Jesus should go to his house. But a comparison with Mark makes it all plain. Presumably, therefore, Mark's narrative lay under Luke's hand.—Here is another instance of apparent borrowing and adaptation. The conversation with the Scribe in the temple about the First Commandment, related by Mark, records the Scribe's approving remark, xii. 32, 'Teacher, thou hast well said,' &c., and concludes with the statement that by this answer Jesus effectually silenced all further persecutors, xii. 34 :—

> And no man any more durst ask him a question.

In the Third Gospel the incident is given in another form, and assigned to a different place and time, x. 25-

37. But the compiler, finding Mark's conclusion and desiring not to lose it, has to arrange an appropriate place for it. It is accordingly appended to the reply to the Sadducees concerning the resurrection, xx. 27-40:—

> But that the dead are raised, even Moses shewed . . . And certain of the scribes answering said, *Teacher, thou hast well said.* For they *durst* not *any more ask him* any *question.*

Such coincidences seem best explained by the literary dependence of Luke on Mark.

§ 2. Its Relation to Matthew.

It might be sufficient to argue that Luke could not have employed Matthew's Gospel, because his preface implies that the works with which he was acquainted did not bear the names of apostles or eye-witnesses of the deeds of Jesus. But without resorting to this plea, let us examine the indications of the documents themselves. The comparison of Luke with Matthew introduces us to a more intricate problem. Most readers will have observed that besides the contents common to all three, there is a large amount of matter belonging to Matthew and Luke, which is not found in Mark. The report of the preaching of the Baptist, the account of the Temptation, the great Sermon, belong to this group of narratives. These are evidently closely related. Other stories, however, though dealing with the same themes, are obviously independent, if not irreconcilable, like the legends of the Birth, and the manifestations after the Resurrection. What evidence as to the relation of our First and Third Gospels may be derived (1) from their respective treatment of elements included in the

Second also, and (2) from the occurrence in them of sayings or incidents common to them alone?

(1) Two questions arise in connection with the elements in which all three agree; (i.) one concerns the inner form of the separate items; (ii.) the other enquires after their general arrangement.

(*a*) In the first place the examination of parallel passages between Mark and the other two gospels will show instance after instance in which Luke does not contain additions or insertions now found in Matthew, and stands, therefore much nearer to Mark. Consider, for example, the following cases.

Mark ii. 17.	*Luke* v. 31, 32.	*Matt.* ix. 12, 13.
And when Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, *They that are* whole[1] *have no need of* a *physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.*	And Jesus answering said unto them, *They that are* whole[1] *have no need of a physician but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners* to repentance.	But when he heard it, he said, *They that are* whole[1] *have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.* But go ye and learn what this meaneth. I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; for *I came not to call the righteous but sinners.*

Here Matthew inserts a quotation from *Hos.* vi. 6, which he attributes to Jesus a second time, xii. 7. Luke, however, while making his own little addition to Mark's words, 'to repentance,' ignores the prophetic reference of Matthew both in this passage, and on its subsequent occurrence.

[1] Mark and Matthew have the same Greek word; Luke uses another.

Mark ii. 25-28.

And he said unto *them*, *Did ye* never *read what David did, when he* had need and *was an hungered*, he, *and they that were with him;* how *he entered into the house of God* when Abiathar was high priest, *and did eat the shew-bread, which* it is *not lawful to eat save* for *the priests*, and gave also *to them* that were with *him?*

And he *said* unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath:

so that *the Son of Man is* lord even *of the sabbath.*

Luke vi. 3-5.

And Jesus answering them said, *Have ye* not *read*, even this, *what David did, when he was an hungered*, he, *and they that were with him:* how *he entered into the house of God, and did* take and *eat the shew-bread*, and gave also *to them* that were with *him*, which it is *not lawful to eat save* for *the priests* alone,

And he *said* unto them,

The Son of Man is lord of the sabbath.

Matt. xii. 3-8.

But he said unto *them, Have ye* not *read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him;* how *he entered into the house of God and did eat the shew-bread, which* it was *not lawful* for him *to eat*, neither *for them* that were with *him, but* for *the priests* alone? Or have ye not read in the law how that on the sabbath day the priests in the temple profane the sabbath and are guiltless? But I *say* unto you that a greater thing than the temple is here. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For *the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath.*

If Luke had had Matthew's Gospel before him as well as Mark's, why should he a second time pass over the quotation from Hosea? Does it not seem more probable that he was unacquainted with it? A similar inferenc

will be suggested by other instances, such as *Mark* x. 29, *Luke* xviii. 29, *Matt.* xix. 28; or *Mark* xii. 10, 11, *Luke* xx. 17, 18, *Matt.* xxi. 42-44.

(*b*) While Luke thus stands nearer to Mark in his version of their common matter, a further proof of his independence of Matthew may be found in this circumstance: where Matthew departs from Mark's *order*, besides adding to his *words*, Luke takes no more notice of the variation in the arrangement than he does of the insertions in the discourse. Luke has, it is true, his own divergences, but they are produced by a different cause. For example, Matthew, desirous of putting his summary of the new legislation as early as possible, breaks up Mark's whole story of the first sabbath at Capernaum, which Luke closely follows. Some of the incidents he omits altogether: some he introduces elsewhere. In like manner, the subsequent group of anecdotes, illustrating the early missionary work of Jesus, which run side by side in the Second and Third Gospels, are distributed over a wide range of other material in the First.[1] The impression of the sequence of Luke on Mark, and his independence of Matthew, is thus confirmed.

(*2*) But does not Luke agree with Matthew in many passages which do not occur in Mark at all? Assuredly. How, then, is this concord to be explained? Did Luke derive them from Matthew, or Matthew from Luke Or did they each employ separately the same common source? It will be sufficient for the present if it can be shown to be probable that the Third Evangelist did not borrow directly from the First.

(*a*) The common matter peculiar to Matthew and

[1] Comp. chap. vii., § 2, 1.

Luke sometimes occurs in parallel strips, such as the report of the Baptist's preaching, or the narrative of the Temptation (save for a change in the order of the second and third trials). But in other cases, it is very differently placed. For instance, almost the whole of *Matt.* xi. will be found in Luke, but in half-a-dozen fragments of diverse length and unexpectedly fresh connections. The following table shows their dispersion.

Matthew		*Luke*
xi. 2-11	=	vii. 18-28.
12-13	=	xvi. 16.
14		not in Luke.
15	=	viii. 8, xiv. 35.
16-19	=	vii. 31-35.
20-24	=	x. 13-15.
25-27	=	x. 21-22.
28-30		not in Luke.

Which seems the more likely, that Luke, finding Matthew's discourse as a whole, shivered it to pieces and lodged the fragments up and down his narrative, omitting altogether its remarkable close, or that Matthew, who so constantly masses the utterances of Jesus, gathered sayings from various sources into a continuous address? The evidence, as regards Matthew's literary method, will be made more complete hereafter:[1] may it not be said at present that the priority does not seem to lie with the First Evangelist?

(*b*) If the arrangement of the common matter appears sometimes to be of earlier date in Luke, compared with Matthew, is it possible to draw any conclusions with respect to its forms? Such evidence is no doubt of a

[1] See chap. vii. § 1, 2.

most delicate character, and the same signs will be interpreted differently by different readers. But some illustrations may be offered for consideration. In the passage quoted above from *Matt.* xi. 2-11, a remarkable addition will be noticed in the parallel in *Luke* vii. 21 :—

> In that hour he cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and on many that were blind he bestowed sight.

It has been already observed that this statement translates into outward physical miracle the symbolic language in which Jesus was wont to describe inward moral change.[1] This points undoubtedly to a later date, at a farther remove from the teacher's words, when the spiritual imagination had lost the key to their secret, and a dull and literal interpretation demanded that they should be visibly confirmed. In this case the form in Matthew must be judged the older; though, as in corresponding parallels between Matthew and Mark,[2] this is not decisive with respect to the whole narratives in which they lie.—The parable of the Talents, again, occurs both in Matthew and in Luke. The theme is the same, though its treatment varies; in the First Gospel, different sums are allotted to different servants, five talents, two, and one, *Matt.* xxv. 15; in the Third all alike receive a single mina, *Luke* xix. 13. In the results there is some divergence; but the sentence on the servant who made no use of the money entrusted to him, shows that the stories have sprung from a single root.

Matt. xxv. 24-29.	*Luke* xix. 20-26.
And he also that had received the one talent came and said,	And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy

[1] See chap. iv. § 3, 2, p. 153.

[2] See chap. v. § 2, 4, p. 185.

Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter: and I was afraid, and went away and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, thou hast thine own. But his lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back mine own with interest. Take ye away therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away.

pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin: for I feared thee because thou art an austere man; thou takest up that thou layest not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. He saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I am an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow; then wherefore gavest thou not my money into the bank, and I at my coming should have required it with interest. And he said unto them that stood by, Take away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds. I say unto you that unto every one that hath shall be given: but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him.

The agreement here proves the original identity of the parables. The sequel, however, presents a startling discord:—

Matt. xxv. 30.

And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Luke xix. 27.

Howbeit these mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

What is the cause of this sudden leap in the story

according to the Third Evangelist? It is in reality the conclusion of *another story*, which Luke has combined with the parable of the Pounds,—the story of the nobleman who went into a distant country 'to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return,' ver. 12. But he was not left to assume his power undisturbed, for it is added, ver. 14:—

> His citizens hated him, and sent an ambassage after him, saying, We will not that this man reign over us.

And it is on these rebellious subjects that the royal doom is now pronounced. There is nothing like this in Matthew; and it becomes apparent that Luke, besides adopting an independent version of the main idea, has blended with it some touches from a different parable, which can no longer be recovered in its integrity.[1] Between the Talents and the Pounds it might be difficult to settle the claim of priority: but there can be little doubt that Matthew's simple form represents an earlier type than

[1] It is possible that one of these, the fate of the king's 'enemies,' has suggested a touch in another story in which Matthew shows a decided advance in complexity over Luke, the marriage feast, *Matt.* xxii. 2-14, cp. *Luke* xiv. 16-24. Luke's host becomes a king in Matthew: the great supper is turned into the wedding of the king's son: and to the rude behaviour of the invited guests is added the murder of the servants charged with the announcement that all is ready. This draws down on the murderers an invasion by the king's armies which destroy them, ver. 7, as the 'enemies' are slain in *Luke* xix. 27. The episode has been obviously imported into the simple story as related by Luke, for after the burning of the city, the wedding feast is still ready, and fresh guests have to be found. The entry of the man without a wedding garment who is then expelled, *Matt.* xxii. 11-14, is an additional trait, showing the later character of Matthew's version.

the compound narrative of Luke. But in other instances, the priority seems as clearly to belong to the Third Gospel. Compare for example, the two versions of the Lord's Prayer.[1]

Matt. vi. 9-12.	*Luke* xi. 2-4.
Our Father which art in heaven,	Father,
Hallowed be thy name.	Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.	Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.	
Give us this day our daily bread.	Give us day by day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.	And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us.
And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.	And bring us not into temptation.

The form in Luke is much shorter than that of Matthew. Is the difference due to growth, or to omission? Now it cannot be denied that in the version we habitually use, an important addition has been made. What is known as the Doxology, 'For thine is the kingdom, &c.,' has been appended to the close of the prayer as it now stands in our oldest texts. This addition was the work of the Church; it was possibly in oral use at an early date, though it was not incorporated in the manuscripts till a much later time. But if such clauses could be attached when reverence for the words of Jesus might have been supposed strong enough to guard his own prayer from unauthorised supplements, much more was it possible for

[1] On the additions made by early Christian scribes to the form in Luke, see chap. i., page 20.

the separate petitions to be amplified with explanatory phrases when the tradition was still elastic. The words 'thy will be done' are an interpretation of the prayer for the coming of the kingdom, and they are, as it were, sanctioned by having dropped from the lips of Jesus in Gethsemane. Similarly the final clause, 'but deliver us from the evil,' has manifest reference to the temptation or trial into which the disciple desires not to be brought. It seems more likely that the brief prayer of the Teacher was thus expanded by the piety of believers, than that its fuller clauses were curtailed by imperfect memory or deliberate intent.—In the case just discussed, the spirit of the two prayers is identical. But it sometimes happens that changes in the form involve considerable changes in the meaning. Few casual readers would be able to name the differences between the Blessings as they are recorded by Matthew or by Luke, yet they are of high significance and interest. The following Beatitudes prefixed to the Great Sermon are doubtless derived originally from Jesus. Yet, as we study their variations, we cannot help asking ourselves which represents more nearly the Master's words.[1]

Matt. v. 3, 5, 4, 11.	*Luke* vi. 20-22.
Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.	Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.
Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.	Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled.
Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.	Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.
Blessed are ye when men shall	Blessed are ye when men shall

[1] Compare chap. i. § 4, 4, p. 46.

reproach you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and reproach you and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake.

The four blessings in Luke are followed by four woes, pronounced on the rich, the satisfied, the laughing, and the men of good repute, to which nothing corresponds at all in Matthew. They are all concerned with the contrast, which runs right through the Third Gospel between the poor and the rich; and they are addressed with direct utterance to the men who thronged around the Teacher. But in Matthew the whole tone is changed. The 'poor' are no longer the suffering and down-trodden, the godly men of the Psalms, tormented at the hands of wealthy and brutal persecutors, and longing for redress: they are the poor in spirit, and the hungry after righteousness. This change is accompanied by another: the transformed blessings are not pronounced on any one in particular. They are reflective utterances founded on spiritual experience; not the impassioned cry of the prophet who beholds great wrongs and boldly declares that they shall be set right. Judgment between these two versions is difficult, and interpreters are divided. But if on the whole, the report of the Great Sermon in the Third Gospel seems to contain fewer elements of later thought and feeling than that in the First, may we not believe that we approach nearer to the heart of Jesus, or at least to the impression left by him on the first disciples, through the Blessings and Woes of Luke, than through the Beatitudes of Matthew? In that case we shall again infer that the Third Evangelist was not acquainted with the First.

§ 3. Peculiarities of Arrangement.

The inquiry so far has suggested the probability that among the authorities for his narrative Luke employed our Mark, and some other collection of the sayings of Jesus also used independently by our Matthew. The peculiarities of the Third Gospel, are, however, very imperfectly accounted for by these assumptions. Some further distinguishing features deserve consideration.

(1) Among the most prominent of these is the large quantity of unique matter which it contains. If the total contents of the several Gospels should be represented by 100, then it has been calculated that the peculiar elements in the First Three Gospels would be represented by these proportional numbers:—[1]

Matthew	42
Mark	7
Luke	59

The amount of matter without parallel in the other two Gospels is thus much greater in Luke than in Matthew. Every reader will recollect the beautiful birth stories of John the Baptist and of Jesus, with the hymns which have expressed for so many generations the prayers and praises of the Church. And how many more narratives do we not owe to the same writer—the description of the opening of Jesus' ministry in the synagogue at Nazareth, the stories of the widow of Nain, of Mary and Martha, of Zacchæus, of the journey to Emmaus, and the Ascension. What a picture-gallery has been drawn for us in the parables, the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus, the Dishonest Steward, the Unjust Judge, the Pharisee and the Publican! These

[1] Westcott, *Introduction*, p. 195.

figures all belong to the Third Gospel: what hand first sketched them? Like so many other questions, this, also is more easily asked than answered.

(2) It has already become plain that the Third Evangelist employed at least two sources; it is probable that the number was greater. Attention has already been called, in another discussion, to the repetition of the same saying on different occasions.[1] To the parallels then presented from Mark and Luke, the following duplicates may be added within Luke alone:—

ix. 23-24.

And he said unto all, if any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

xi. 43

Woe unto you Pharisees, for ye love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the market-places.

xiv. 11.

For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

xiv. 27.

Whosoever doth not bear his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

xvi. 33.

Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

xx. 46.

Beware of the Scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love salutations in the market-places, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts.

xviii. 14.

. . . . . For every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

How are such duplicates to be explained? It is, of course, possible that Jesus uttered the same or similar sayings again and again to fresh groups of listeners.

[1] Chap. i. § 3, 2*b*, pp. 28-30.

But the fact that the same words sometimes occur in such diverse connections that their application and meaning become quite changed, points to another cause. The remembrance of their original significance, or of the occasion which called them forth, became confused, and they were grouped in one way by one collector, while a second assigned them to another group. The Third Evangelist gathering all available material together, sifting, separating, and combining, as he thought best, did not reject the duplicate maxims as he dropped the duplicate miracles, but inserted them from the various forms of the tradition with which he was acquainted into the places which seemed to be most fitting. Other evidence points to a similar inference. The lawyer's question, x. 25, leads to the selection *by him* of the same two commandments which in *Mark* xii. 28 are chosen *by Jesus* as the greatest of all; but the scene on the journey after the return of the Seventy has no other resemblance to the Temple incident of our Second Gospel. The demand for the seats on either hand of Jesus, preferred by the sons of Zebedee, is omitted by Luke; but he does not wholly fail to report the exhortation which it called forth. It is transferred to his account of the Last Supper, xxii. 24-27. How should such a place have been suggested for it, had he not found some tradition which disposed it there?

(3) It has been said above[1] that the arrangement of the Third Gospel is in general harmony with that of the Second. This statement, however, needs some qualification. It is true that Luke, like Mark, describes Jesus as preaching in Galilee and as crucified in Jerusalem. But

[1] See § 1, 1, p. 208.

his Gospel does not fall apart in the same way into two sections, the months of labour in the north and the days of peril and suffering in the capital, bound together by a journey on the eastern side of the Jordan. Luke has his own view of that journey. After following Mark through the record of the Galilæan ministry, he represents Jesus as 'steadfastly setting his face to go to Jerusalem,' ix. 51. But Jesus does not go through Peræa, but *through Samaria*. This is the opening of a new and unexpected act in the great drama. The story of it occupies many chapters which contains a large proportion of the elements already noted as peculiar to this Gospel; and it only falls into the common narrative with the blessing bestowed on the children, xviii. 15. A journey from Galilee to Jerusalem through Samaria would occupy but a few days. But this is made the occasion for a great task of missionary zeal, the despatch of the Seventy Disciples, x. 1. After a visit to Martha and Mary—whom later tradition placed at Bethany,—he is still, xiii. 22, on his way to Jerusalem; while later yet, xvii. 11, he is 'passing through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.' The geography of the narrative is plainly in confusion; [1] its ideal significance will be explained directly: it is enough now to observe that this arrangement, special to Luke, divides his gospel into three portions, instead of two, whose successive scenes are in Galilee, in Samaria, and at Jerusalem. It is in accordance with the artistic method of the writer that each

[1] It is hardly necessary to add that no one approaching Jerusalem through Samaria, would go so far out of his way as to descend into the Jordan valley and pass through Jericho, xviii. 35.

division is introduced by a reference to those who would not receive the 'good news.' At Nazareth, the new Teacher, whose first sermon has roused the townspeople's wrath, is in danger of his life. The people of the Samaritan village refuse him a night's lodging because he is on his way to the mother-city of their hereditary foes. As he rounds the declivity of the Mount of Olives and confronts the glittering array of temple and palace and tower, he weeps over the doomed capital which knew not the things which belonged unto peace. Beneath these varieties of form lies one common thought; but they are symbols of feeling, rather than reports of fact.

§ 4. Characteristics of Thought and Feeling.

More important than these external differences, though in some respects more difficult to grasp, is the new presentment of Christ and Christianity.

(1) The power of Messiah is displayed on a broader scale. The hints of human limitation, still traceable in Mark, have dropped away; no inability to perform mighty works hangs a burden on his efforts; no ignorance of the day and the hour veils the future from him.

(*a*) This higher glory is especially displayed in the added significance now attached to the term 'Son of God.' In the oldest tradition the official meaning of the name was carried back to the Baptism; that was the hour when the divine choice was signalised. But the growth of loyalty and reverence was not satisfied to stop on Jordan's banks. The title suggested a closer relationship than that effected by the descent of the

Spirit on to the man Jesus. Not by appointment or adoption only was he 'Son of God'; he must have been so by birth itself, i. 35, and his appearance in the world must have been hailed by prophecy and celebrated by the songs of angels. Into this relation no other could enter; Jesus might indeed promise the faithful disciples that they should be 'sons of the Most High,' vi. 35, cp. i. 32; but he remained in unapproachable grandeur as 'the Son;' to him have all things been delivered by the Father; he alone knoweth who the Father is, he alone has power to reveal the Father to whomsoever he wills, x. 22.

(*b*) The special manifestation, in our Third Gospel, of this more exalted eminence of the Christ, may be traced in the greater emphasis laid on his triumph over evil. The temptation at which Mark briefly hints, is set forth by Luke with a triple conquest over the Adversary. Baffled and disappointed the devil departs from him 'for a season;' but no danger can harm Messiah till his time has come, xxii. 37. So at Nazareth he passes calmly through the infuriated villagers, eager to hurl him from the cliff, and goes his way, iv. 30: and when Herod would kill him, he marches on fearlessly to Jerusalem, xiii. 31-33. His ministry is a kind of warfare between the powers of good and evil. The Twelve receive authority over all devils, ix. 1; when the Seventy return, he announces to them that the victory is complete, the Adversary is overthrown: 'I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven,' x. 18. But the crisis, though it may be delayed, cannot be evaded. Satan, even if fallen, is still powerful. He finds an instrument in Judas, whose treachery is now ascribed to him,

xxii. 3. He will, indeed, no more succeed in the long run through Judas than through Peter, xxii. 31; for the road to death (ix. 44, xviii. 31) is also the road to the risen life; and when Jesus starts for Jerusalem, on the fatal journey, it is with the full end in sight, the joy of being 'received up' into heaven, ix. 51, xxiv. 51, *Acts* i. 9, 11.

(*c*) Messiah's authority, accordingly, comes more fully into view. He distributes to his servants in the Church their powers and duties till he comes again, xii. 42 foll., xix. 11 foll.: and, above all, new stress is laid on the Resurrection, for which a sequel is provided in the Ascension. The meagre account of Mark, so scanty in detail, and so abrupt in its close, in which Jesus himself is not seen at all,[1] is replaced by a narrative of manifestations, first to Cleopas and his companion, and then to the Eleven, on the way to Emmaus and at Jerusalem. The purpose of Messiah's suffering is vindicated, xxiv. 26; it was the necessary pathway to his glory. But there is something more: he has a charge to lay upon them, and a gift to impart. *They* are to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name to all the nations; *he* will send forth the promise of his Father on them. So, in the act of bestowing on them his last blessing, he is parted from them, and borne up to heaven. How startling is this development in advance of Mark?

(2) Side by side with the increased significance of the

[1] The Gospel of Mark in the oldest MSS. ended at xvi. 8. It may, however, be thought that the language in ver. 7, 'He goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him,' points to some account of a subsequent manifestation of Jesus himself.

person of Jesus as Messiah, there is a more brilliant light upon his character as the embodiment of the divine pity for sinners, the actual symbol and channel of the redeeming power of grace. In this Gospel do we first hear the word 'Be ye merciful, even as your Father is merciful,' vi. 36. Here is the story of the woman who loved much and was much forgiven; here stand the figures of the Prodigal and of the Publican who could only cry 'God be merciful to me a sinner'; here, the eagerness of Zacchæus to amend his ways draws forth the declaration of Messiah's true function, 'to seek and to save that which was lost;' here, Peter is won back to compunction by his Lord's look; here the penitent thief is the first-fruits that Jesus will carry into Paradise; here, the duty entrusted to the disciples, the great function of the Church, is to proclaim to all the world the forgiveness of sins. It is in harmony with this aspect of Christianity that the type of character which the Evangelist most loves to depict is that of the quiet peaceful inward life. He marks the home at Nazareth where the mother ponders over the wondrous things that befall her son; he lifts the curtain of the chamber where Mary sits in her choice of the good part; he dwells on the gentle ministrations of the women who gathered round the Teacher; and he recalls his word of tenderness for the daughters of Jerusalem in his last hours.

(3) Beside the sinners who most need his love, and who often most deserve it, there is another class for whom this Gospel has a special word, the suffering poor. The lowly, the oppressed, the ignorant, are never far from the writer's view. It was for these that the good

tidings were first designed; to them the prophet spoke most clearly of promise and of hope. The earliest to greet the infant Saviour are the country shepherds to whom the angels brought the joyful news; they, rather than the wise men from the East, are the first to find and recognise the Lord. Not to the wealthy and the learned are the chief places in the kingdom given. The Great Sermon opens with Woes upon the rich and Blessings on the needy; and the parable sends the rich man to torments while the poor beggar at his gate passes to Abraham's bosom. To succour poverty thus becomes one of the first duties. To the disciples generally, and not to the rich young man only whom Jesus sought to persuade to follow him, is the command addressed 'Sell that ye have, and give alms,' xii. 33, comp. xviii. 22; while Zacchæus marks his penitence and devotion by giving half his goods to the poor, xix. 8.

(4) This sympathy with the needy appears in a more emphatic form in a group of passages sometimes supposed to bear the stamp of that extreme Jewish section of the early Church whose very name, the Ebionites or the 'Poor,' implied their acquaintance with poverty and suffering.[1] The story of the rich man and the beggar at his gate, xvi. 19-31, is founded on the contrast between want and wealth. No *moral* reason is assigned for the different lots of the rich man and

[1] The hostility to worldliness implied in these passages really, however, marked the attitude of the whole Church (cp. 'love not the world') in the first generations: nor was it altogether peculiar to Christianity. It appeared in another form in the Greek Cynics, just as it also existed among the Jewish Essenes.

Lazarus in the next world; their positions are reversed on the simple principle that the one received 'his good things' in his earthly life, the other evil; and this inequality must be redressed. The story has many peculiar features which mark it off from the parables of the Teacher. The designation of the beggar by name is a unique departure from the habit of presenting only types; the description of the realms beyond death is without parallel in the reserve with which the conditions of the future are elsewhere veiled; and the allusions to Jewish unbelief and Messiah's resurrection point distinctly to a later time. If suffering here may be supposed to qualify the patient for comfort hereafter, it may in like manner be viewed as constituting a claim on the divine attention which may be pressed with urgency till it is heard. So the persecuted faithful, waiting Messiah's advent, and not seeing it, cry day and night to God to avenge them. Let them pray and not faint; even the unrighteous judge yielded to the widow's importunity; how much more shall God avenge his own elect, xviii. 1-8. The obvious reference of this parable to the delay in Messiah's coming withdraws it at once from the cycle of the original sayings of Jesus; and thus relieves his teaching about the Father from what many have felt to be a most disturbing comparison between God and the godless officer. If it be urged that there is here no identity suggested, but a contrast, even the contrast implies the lawfulness of a demand quite unlike the spirit with which Jesus himself faced impending death, 'Thy will, not mine, be done.' By the side of the picture of the unjust judge hangs a sketch from the same hand, xi. 5-8, in the description

of the householder called up at night by a neighbour in search of bread to set before a traveller who has just arrived. He will not rise to serve a friend; he gets up only that he may the more quickly sleep again. The affinity between the two passages is so strongly marked as to render it clear that they spring from the same tendencies of thought and feeling. Beneath the latter, at least, there probably lies a genuine recollection of some words of Jesus, for the sequel clearly proceeds from him: but the unspiritual imagination has distorted its form, and left only a perverted image of the Master's thought.[1]

(5) One more noteworthy characteristic of this Gospel is linked so closely to what may be described as its general aim, that it might seem hardly necessary to mention it here; viz., its universal scope. Whether the Gospel should be limited to the Jews, or whether it should be addressed also to the Gentiles, was a question of tremendous importance in the early Church. It is a

[1] With these peculiar elements in Luke is usually classed the parable of the Unrighteous Steward, xvi. 1-9. This passage, like those already mentioned, must be studied as a whole to understand its full significance: it is no elaborate allegory in which each detail has a meaning, and there is no need to identify the rich man with either God or the devil! The lesson of it lies in ver. 9, that worldly wealth must be employed in alms, so as to secure entry into the dwelling-places of the coming age. The moral quality of the Steward's proceedings does not come into view: he simply serves as an illustration of worldly wisdom. In its present form the story seems plainly to belong to that section of the Church which viewed wealth as 'unrighteous,' and found merit in poverty. This is closely connected with the conception that the suffering are entitled to compensation, which is seen in the story of the rich man and Lazarus.

sign of the early character of much of Mark's material, that it seems so little influenecd by the cleavage which took place on this dispute. One incident there is, indeed, that of the Syrophœnician woman, where Mark's version does not exhibit the harshness of Matthew's story, omits the uncompromising words there assigned to Jesus, 'I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' *Matt.* xv. 24, and prefixes to the bitter saying 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs' the less exclusive phrase 'let the children first be filled,' *Mark* vii. 27.[1] This whole occurrence Luke ignores altogether. On the other hand, he intimates from the very outset that his conception recognises no such limits. This is the meaning of the opening incident at Nazareth, which announces by a symbolic narrative the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews and its proclamation to the Gentiles. This is the key to the allegory of the marvellous draught of fishes. This explains the references to the Gentile cities of Tyre and Sidon which would have repented had they seen the mighty works wrought on the Galilæan shore, x. 13. This breaks out in the glorious promise to those who 'shall come from the east and west, the north and south, and sit down in the kingdom of God,' xiii. 29. And this presents us with the type of gratitude in the Samaritan leper, xvii. 15, 16, and the type of true neighbourliness in that other Samaritan to whom Christendom has awarded the title 'Good.' Thus in its outlook upon the world the Third Gospel stands for the

[1] Later on, in the discourse on the last things, it is said that the Gospel must first be preached under all the nations, xiii. 10.

widest human sympathy, and the broadest interpretation of the purposes of God.

§ 5. Its General Aim.

The question just raised concerning the scope of the Gospel as it is presented by Luke, leads to the consideration of the general aim of his work, in relation on the one hand to the system of Judaism with its legal obligations, and on the other to the needs of the Gentiles. What view is here taken of the attitude of Jesus to the Law, with reference to the claims of those who required that its demands should be fulfilled before believers were admitted to the privileges of the kingdom; and what sanction does Jesus give by anticipation to the labours of the Apostle Paul?

(1) It is not surprising that a Gospel founded on varied sources should contain utterances of varied tones, and should not, indeed, be always entirely self-consistent. There are, in fact, diverse elements in Luke which seem only imperfectly harmonised. Some passages are strongly impregnated with Jewish expectations; not only is the 'kingdom of God' represented under the familiar figure of a banquet or great supper, as in xiv. 15-24, but at the farewell meal Jesus promises the Twelve (including, apparently, Judas) posts of authority over their nation in the future glory, xxii. 28-30:—

> Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom; *and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

How different is this from the word 'the kingdom of heaven is like leaven.'—That Jesus should be regarded

as the destined fulfiller of prophecy, was of course natural to those who received him as the Messiah for whom their race had longed. The function is assigned to him at Nazareth when he reads in the synagogue the passage from Isaiah beginning

> The spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor,

and then announces 'To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears,' iv. 18-21. And after the resurrection the prophetic proof of the necessity of his sufferings is twice made the subject of his discourse, xxiv. 25-27, and 44-46. This motive, however, nowhere assumes in Luke the prominence allotted to it in Matthew. Greater importance, in view of later struggles within the Church, attaches to the declaration of the universally binding character of the law. Two verses now stand side by side in perplexing neighbourship, in which apparently opposite principles are laid down. First it is affirmed, xvi. 16, that 'the law and the prophets were until John.' The Baptist was the last in the great succession of representatives of the old system: with the actual foundation of the kingdom that system has done its work of preparation and disappears, cp. *Matt.* xi. 11-13. But what is abolished by one phrase is imposed again by the next, xvi. 17:—

> But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than *for one tittle of the law to fall.*

One of Luke's sources, therefore, described Jesus, like a Rabbi of the austerest type, as enforcing the strictest perpetuity of the Law. In the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus the testimony of Moses and the prophets is of at least equal weight with that of one risen from the

dead, xvi 29-31. So the infant Messiah is treated precisely as the law demands, in full recognition of Paul's principle that when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his son, born under the law, *Gal.* iv. 4. There is, indeed, on the other hand, a consciousness that Israel has failed, and must, like the barren fig-tree, be rooted out. But the love of ancient order was not only intelligible, it deserved a reverent regard; and a tender little apology for those who could not at once accept the full consequences of larger principles belongs to this Gospel only. 'New wine,' says the Jesus of all Three Evangelists, 'must be put into fresh wine-skins.' Luke alone adds, v. 39:—

> And no man having drunk old wine desireth new, for he saith, The old is good.

The true attitude, however, of the narrower past to the broader future is seen in the beautiful figure of Simeon, in whom Hebrew piety makes ready with joy to give place to the new light.

(2) The great champion of freedom in the early struggles about the obligations of the Law was, of course, the Apostle Paul. The relation of the Third Gospel to his teaching was expressed in ecclesiastical tradition, at the end of the second century, by the theory that Paul had stood to Luke in a connection similar to that of Peter with Mark. It was even supposed that when the Apostle wrote of 'his gospel,' he referred to the book bearing Luke's name. Few critics of eminence now believe that he had any share in its composition; of the distinctive Pauline doctrines of the person of Christ and the meaning of his death there is no trace; but that such a view should have been possible, is sufficient clue to certain

harmonies of thought. There are even occasional correspondences of phrase. The account of the Last Supper given in *1 Cor.* xi. 23-25, the earliest written record we possess, stands in nearest accord with that in *Luke* xxii. 19-20. In the discourse addressed to the Seventy disciples charged with the gospel-mission, a principle is laid down of high importance to those who laboured among the Gentiles. If they were offered food, must they enquire whether it had been first sacrificed to an idol, and, in that case, refuse it? The difficulty arose, for instance, at Corinth. When the faithful were invited to dinner by an unbeliever, courtesy to their host might clash with the commands of their religion. The Apostle's instructions dealt with the matter thus, *1 Cor.* x. 27:—

> If one of them that believe not biddeth you (to a feast), and ye are disposed to go; *whatsoever is set before you, eat*, asking no question for conscience sake.

In similar terms does Jesus, in Luke alone, despatching the disciples beyond Jewish soil, direct them thus, x. 8:—

> Into whatever city ye enter, and they receive you, *eat such things as are set before you.*

The conversation with the Sadducees about the resurrection is reported by all our Synoptists; Luke only adds to the argument of Jesus 'God is not the God of the dead but of the living,' xx. 38, the explanatory remark 'for all live unto him.' Have we here an echo of Pauline words, 'in that he liveth, he liveth unto God,' *Rom.* vi. 10; 'none of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we die unto the Lord,' xiv. 7, 8? The language of justification, *Luke* xvi. 15, xviii. 13-14 (cp. 'believe and be saved,' viii. 12), reminds us of Paul's

great argument; at the beginning of the Gospel the genealogy of Jesus is traced up to Adam, and he is thus linked rather with humanity than with the Davidic race; and at the close, in xxiv. 34, an appearance of the risen Jesus to the Twelve is recorded by Luke only, which appears to correspond with that mentioned by the Apostle in *1 Cor.* xv. 5.

(3) More important than these slenderer indications is the emphatic sanction provided in this Gospel for the Mission to the Gentiles. The Sermon at Nazareth, inserted out of order[1] so as to secure for it a place at the beginning, is a kind of formal plea for the admission of those beyond the pale of Israel to the privileges of the kingdom. The same programme is again set forth in the symbolic miracle of the draught of fishes. But most noteworthy of all is the account of the despatch of the Seventy, x. 1. The time and the place are alike remarkable. Jesus is on his last journey, ix. 51; and he has already entered Samaria. He was but two or three days' march, by the usual route, to Jerusalem; and there was not scope among the villages through which he would pass upon the way for so large a band of preachers, two and two. An examination of the instructions given to the disciples shows that they are in part derived from an exhortation elsewhere addressed, *Matt.* x., to the Twelve. This is, indeed, implied later on by Luke himself. The Seventy are warned, x. 4, to carry *no purse, no wallet, and no shoes.* But the conversation with the Apostles at

[1] This is shown partly by comparison with Mark's narrative, and partly by the circumstance that the story itself contains a reference to things done in Capernaum, iv. 23, while Luke's narrative places these events later, iv. 31-41.

the Last Supper shows that it was really the Twelve who were thus confided to their hearers' good will, xxii. 35 :—

> And he said unto them, When I sent you forth *without purse, and wallet, and shoes*, lacked ye anything? And they said, *Nothing*.

Somewhat similar directions had, indeed, been given to the Twelve, according to our Evangelist, ix. 1-5. But the scanty report on this occasion shows that the Mission of the Seventy was really, in his view, of much greater significance, so that he was justified in applying to this new enterprise the language which his traditional sources associated with the first labours of the original companions of the Teacher. What, then, was its real meaning? The number itself partly discloses it. As the number of the Twelve was early connected in the Church—if not so designed by Jesus himself—with the twelve tribes of Israel, so that of the Seventy corresponded with the Jewish reckoning of the nations of the world. There were seventy peoples, it was calculated, on the basis of the table of the distribution of the human race, in *Genesis* x.[1] And these seventy peoples spoke seventy languages, which the Rabbis, with their quaint love of numerical correspondences, supposed the seventy members of the Sanhedrin understood! The Seventy Disciples were thus the symbol of the appeal of Christianity to the whole world. That there was no actual mission may be inferred from the fact they are no sooner sent out than they return, x. 17, and not a single sign remains of where they went. They had been despatched into every city and place whither 'the Lord' himself would come. The title here applied to Jesus

[1] Corresponding to the seventy peoples are the seventy shepherds, i.e. the prince-angels, in the passage preceding that quoted from Enoch, p. 65.

already suggests that it is not an earthly advent that the Evangelist intends. He has in view the Christ who is going to be 'received up'; it is the risen and glorified Messiah who thus speaks not to Israel only but to humanity at large, and 'comes,' as the kingdom spreads, in the person of his faithful disciples, x. 16, or takes up his abode in the believer's soul, comp. *Ephes.* iii. 17. The Mission of the Seventy is thus an allegory of the preaching to the Gentiles. It provides the approval of Jesus for the work of Paul and his followers; and sets beside the Twelve, as of almost equal authority, the wider Apostolate of which so many traces meet us in the early Church.

(4) If thus the tendencies of opposite parties are recognised and conciliated, may it not be said that it was the writer's purpose to give peaceful expression to divergent views? The vehemence of early conflict has subsided. The development of events has brought its own lessons. The Church has grown; and it has grown largely by extension among the Gentiles. The terms on which these should be admitted had in the course of time settled themselves. When Jerusalem had fallen, and the temple was destroyed, the view of the obligations of the Law was modified. The Church began to accommodate itself to new conditions. Planted from place to place along the Mediterranean, embracing divers nationalities and languages within its fold, it aspired to be in practice what Paul had declared it to be in spiritual fact, one and catholic. This aim is reflected in the Third Gospel. The first season of difficulty has been surmounted; the desire to combine softens the bitterness of party feeling; and the Evangelist seeks to harmonise

the Christianity of Jew and Gentile through personal allegiance to their common Lord.

§ 6. Time, Place, and Author.

It remains to ask whether the Third Gospel supplies us with any definite clues to the time or place of its composition.

(1) The argument which has, on general grounds, placed Luke after Mark, is confirmed by many indications of much later date. The preface implies that the day of eye-witnesses is past. The only source of knowledge is the tradition which they have transmitted, and which is already shaped into material for regular instruction. The new elements of the doctrine of the Christ point in the same direction. Still more significant is the repeated reference to the delay in Messiah's second coming. That is the real meaning of the parable of the Unjust Judge, xviii. 1-8; that is the avowed thought lying in the combined story of the Talents, and the Nobleman who went away to a distant land, to '*receive for himself a kingdom and then return*,' xix. 11-12. The fullest expression is given to this in the modification of the language in the discourse on the Last Things. The fall of Jerusalem is no longer the prelude to the great catastrophe which shall precede the coming of the Son of Man: the announcement of the impending 'tribulation' is withdrawn: the city will lie desolate for a period of unnamed length, till the nations are ripe for their doom, xxi. 24:—

> And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

The writer's view seems to embrace a clear retrospect

of the siege, which he alone, with circumstantial detail, places in the mouth of Jesus, xix. 41-44. In several passages describing the dangers of confession before rulers and kings and governors,[1] the voice of the Church seems to be heard rather than that of the Teacher, uttering encouragement and quickening endurance in his name. These conditions could hardly have been realised before the year 80 A.D. If, as some eminent critics have thought, the consciousness of peril to liberty or life points to the days of the Emperors Domitian or Trajan, the composition of the Gospel will be brought down towards the year 100 A.D., a period perhaps more suitable to the advance of tradition, the heightened conception of the person of Messiah, and the tendency to represent views once in bitter conflict as in peaceful accord.

(2) The geographical confusion into which the writer is betrayed in his account of the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem through Samaria and Galilee, implies that he was not himself familiar with Palestine. He has been assigned by different investigators to many lands, to Asia Minor, Macedonia, Achaia, Rome itself. These various guesses refute each other; they prove, in fact, that the Gospel itself contains no sign by which to identify its author's home. His occasional explanations show that he has taken praiseworthy pains to acquaint himself with localities which he did not personally know. He can inform his readers that Nazareth and Capernaum are 'cities of Galilee,' i. 26, iv. 31. He inserts into the statement (borrowed apparently from *Mark* xi. 1) describing the advance of Jesus to Jerusalem, xix. 29, the

[1] Compare vi. 22, xii. 11, xxi. 12.

explanatory phrase 'the mount that is called the mount of Olives'; he makes a note that the feast of unleavened bread is termed the Passover, xxii. 1; he mentions that Arimathea is 'a city of the Jews,' xxiii. 51, and knows the distance of Emmaus from Jerusalem, xxiv. 13; but neither of these places has been satisfactorily identified. The vague phrase, 'a city of the Jews,' suggests that the writer was himself not a Jew. He was a Gentile writing for Gentiles, whose claims he takes every opportunity of establishing. But he was acquainted with Jewish writings; he refers to their Scriptures; the opening chapters, especially the first, are largely modelled on the Old Testament; and the beautiful hymns which Christendom loves to call by their Latin names, the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus*, the *Nunc Dimittis*, whether adapted or composed by him, are saturated with Hebrew thought and expression.

(3) That the Third Evangelist was a man of superior education and of literary skill, is evident from the polished style of his preface. His language is distinguished by the avoidance of common terms or awkward repetitions. Thus in the story of the paralytic who was brought to Jesus on his bed, while Mark employs the vulgar word *krabatton* four times over, Luke uses no less than three equivalents, and never has to resort to *krabatton* at all. His acquaintance with secular history may not be very accurate,[1] but his attempts to bring the story of Jesus into connection with the larger circle of the world's events, ii. 1, iii. 1, 2, imply that his readers were such as might be expected

[1] See chap. iii. § 1, 3, *b*, *c*.

to take interest in the endeavour to fix Christian dates by the standard of Imperial Rome.

From the time of the Canon of Muratori and of Irenaeus, the Third Gospel has been attributed to Luke. In the New Testament Luke is known only through the designation of him in *Col.* iv. 14, as the 'beloved physician.' The authenticity of this Epistle has been questioned by many critics whose judgment deserves respect. If it is genuine, it was probably not written till after 61 A.D. Supposing Luke had then been with the Apostle Paul in Rome as a young man, he might quite well have composed the Gospel in 80 or 90 A.D. But this seems hardly to give time for the production of the numerous though imperfect narratives mentioned in the Preface. Moreover, the problem is complicated by the authorship of the Book of Acts, which is closely connected with this Gospel. And this book seems to stand at a much further remove from the Apostolic age than we should expect from a writer who had known Paul's generation. How much he derived from his various sources, how much he supplied from his own creative activity, it is impossible to decide. Later tradition described him as a painter. Assuredly the Evangelist who drew the immortal pictures of the Annunciation and the Nativity; who sketched in ineffaceable strokes the figures of the woman which was a sinner, of Priest, Levite, and Samaritan, of the Prodigal, his father and his brother, of the Pharisee and the Publican; and who portrayed in a few touches the home of Mary and Martha, and the supper table at Emmaus—deserves to be regarded as the father of Christian Art.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO S. MATTHEW.

The questions connected with our First Gospel are no less intricate than those arising out of the Third. They have, as before, a two-fold character. They deal first with the problems of literary form, as the enquiry is directed towards comparison of the elements common to this and one or both of the other Gospels, and to the order in which they are arranged. And they are concerned, secondly, with the aim and characteristics of the work, with the modifications apparently introduced into older material, and the tendencies which mark the new. Broadly speaking, the First Gospel may be said to show signs of close relation to the other two, or at least to much of their contents; but while nearly the whole of Mark is in some way or other represented in Matthew, a large part of Luke remains without equivalent. Further, the method of Luke in laying seeming contradictions peacefully side by side, is observable again in Matthew, in spite of a different emphasis on the diversities to be reconciled. Here are elements both of the earliest and the latest date; here are the narrow and the broad, the

conservative and the reforming, the legal and the spiritual, the Judæan and the universalist.

§ 1. Its Framework.

A brief examination suffices to show that the First Gospel is marked by certain structural peculiarities which distinguish its treatment even of the matter common to the other two.

(1) In his general view of the ministry of Jesus, Matthew sides with Mark's distribution of it into two parts as against Luke's into three.[1] The active labours of the Teacher are expended upon Galilee. He journeys thence to Jerusalem only to die. The route along which he passes is the Eastern road through Peræa. When the crowds gather, he will not, indeed, refuse to teach or heal; but he undertakes no new missionary toil, and despatches no band of messengers to announce his coming. The identity of arrangement here between Mark and Matthew may be seen from the following passages:—

Mark x. 1.	*Matt.* xix. 1.
And he arose from thence and cometh into the borders of Judæa, and beyond Jordan; and multitudes come together unto him again; and as he was wont, he taught them again. And there came unto him Pharisees, &c.	And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these words, he departed from Galilee, and came into the borders of Judæa beyond Jordan; and great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there. And there came unto him Pharisees, &c.

The crisis which leads to this development is placed by Matthew as by Mark at Cæsarea Philippi, where the Master's adoption of the title Messiah tendered to him

[1] See chap. v. § 2, 3, p. 181; chap. vi. § 3, 3, p. 226.

by Peter is followed immediately by the announcement of the fate awaiting him at the capital. That this constituted for our Evangelist the second great resolve in the mind of Jesus, corresponding to that which first sent him forth to preach, may be inferred from the parallel phrases with which two sections of the narrative begin :—

Matt. iv. 17.	*Matt.* xvi. 21.
From that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.	*From that time began Jesus* to show unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem.

There is more here than a mere verbal coincidence, there is reflection; the biographer calls attention to the fact that he has formed a view of his subject and is deliberately expressing it. It is, perhaps, a further note of this plan that each division opens with a call to discipleship, iv. 19, xvi. 24, the second summons imposing the fresh condition of the cross; and these in turn are followed by two great mountain scenes, in the first of which Jesus issues the new law of the kingdom, while in the second his authority is confirmed by the divine voice, 'Hear ye him.'

(2) In filling in his framework the First Evangelist again and again adopts the plan of grouping the sayings of Jesus into continuous discourse. These collections are almost without parallel in Mark, save in the succession of parables delivered from the boat on the lake side, or the prophecy of the last things on the Mount of Olives. It has already been shown how the discourse delivered after the Baptist's disciples have brought their message of enquiry, is distributed in Luke over a wide

variety of occasions.[1] The most important example of this process is to be found in the Sermon on the Mount. No one probably would now maintain that this was uttered as it stands, in one stream of speech. It is placed by Matthew at the opening of Messiah's career as the great summary of his teaching; it forms the guide to the life of the disciple; it presents in the briefest compass the essence of the legislation of the kingdom. The materials of which it is composed will be briefly considered hereafter (§ 3, 2); it must suffice now to point out that it embraces several subordinate collections within the larger whole; the Blessings, v. 3-12, the Contrasts between the Old commandments and the New, v. 21-48, the Warnings against popular piety marked by the rythmic refrain 'Thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee,' vi. 1-18, the exhortation against Worldliness, vi. 19-34, for which Luke finds another place—these are so many little sermons, which the editor has here combined into an oration that has moved the world. The address to the Twelve in chap. x. has again the air of a compilation, one section of it, vv. 17-22, appearing slightly modified in the discourse on the last things, *Mark* xiii. 9-13, *Luke* xxi. 12-17. In the series of seven parables in chap. xiii., founded on the three in *Mark* iv., the alterations between public teaching and private explanation show the different layers of traditional deposit; while the method of the collector is betrayed in the introductory formula three times repeated, vv. 24, 31, 33, the parables in the appendix being linked together

[1] See chap. vi. § 2, 2*a*, p. 216.

by the word 'again,' vv. 45, 47.[1] The Evangelist reserves for a final invective at Jerusalem the denunciations against the Scribes and Pharisees, which Luke partially reports elsewhere; he masses them into a seven-fold 'Woe,' xxiii. 13-39, and attaches them to an exhoration addressed to his immediate followers. Conscious, however, of some inappropriateness in this connection, he warns his readers at the outset of the double character of the discourse to come by saying, ver. 1, 'Then spake Jesus to the multitudes *and* to his disciples.'

(3) To these little chains of parable and saying correspond in the first half of the Gospel similar groups of incidents. The Great Sermon is followed by a collection of anecdotes which show the Teacher no longer on the heights of authority, but moving with untiring sympathy among the common needs of men. Ten of these illustrative stories are related in succession, and then the editor brings his narrative to a pause with a summary which he has before employed:—

ix. 35.	iv. 23.
And Jesus went about all the cities and the villages, *teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness.*	*And Jesus went about* in all Galilee, *teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness* among the people.

Another series of incidents in chap. xii., showing the gathering opposition of the Pharisees, is thrust in between two long discourses in xi. and xiii. So far the narrative of the ministry has been composed of alternate sections

[1] Note the formulae of transition from the collections of sayings vii. 28, xi. 1, xiii. 53, xix. 1, xxvi. 1.

of speech and act, though the acts have sometimes carried with them appropriate utterance. But from chap. xiv. onwards this method of arrangement is abandoned, and the order followed, though with large additions, is much closer to that of Mark.

(4) One more external peculiarity must be noted. The occurrence of duplicate sayings has been already observed in Luke,[1] though the Third Evangelist seemed to have rejected some duplicates of occurrences. In Matthew these doublets are even more prominent. It is interesting to find them sometimes in the long addresses which we have seen reason to think were in part compiled out of material more or less scattered and unattached. Let the following instances be examined :—

Matt. v. 29-30.

And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into Gehenna. And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off and cast it from thee, &c.

v. 32.

x. 22.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

x. 38-39.

xxiii. 11.

But he that is greatest

Matt. xviii. 8-9.

And if thy hand or thy foot causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee; it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire. And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, &c.

xix. 9.

xxiv. 9, 13.

And ye shall be hated of all the nations for my name's sake, . . . But he that endureth to the end, the same shal be saved.

xvi. 24-25.

xx. 26.

Whosoever would become

[1] See chap. vi. § 3, 2, p. 224.

among you shall be your servant.

great among you shall be your servant.

In like manner there is an occasional repetition of incidents. Twice is the demand for a sign dismissed with the reply that no sign shall be given save that of Jonah, xii. 39, xvi. 4. Twice (as in Mark, but not in Luke) are the multitudes wondrously fed. And the duplication extends even into detail. Twice do *two* blind men receive their sight, ix. 27-30, xx. 30-34, the first story being omitted by the other Evangelists altogether, and the second, as reported by Mark and Luke, containing but one cure. *Two* demoniacs, in the same fashion, meet Jesus near Gadara; *two* animals are brought to him at the Mount of Olives, and he rides into Jerusalem on *both*.

§ 2. Relation to Mark.

(1) The comparison of the Second Gospel with the First has already shown that almost the whole of the contents of the earlier have some equivalent in the later. The order of Mark's opening chapters is, however, entirely shattered by Matthew, as the following table indicates :—

	Mark	*Matthew*
1.—Jesus begins to preach	i. 14-15	iv. 12, 17
2.—Call of Simon, &c.	i. 16-20	iv. 18-22
3.—In the synagogue at Capernaum	i. 21-28	wanting
4.—Cure of Simon's wife's mother	i. 29-34	viii. 14-17
5.—Preaching through Galilee	i. 35-39	iv. 23
6.—Cure of a leper	i. 40-45	viii. 1-4
7.—Cure of a paralytic	ii. 1-12	ix. 1-8
8.—Call of Levi	ii. 13-17	ix. 9-13
9.—Why the disciples need not fast	ii. 18-22	ix. 14-17
10.—In the cornfields on the Sabbath	ii. 23-28	xii. 1-8

11.—Healing on the Sabbath	iii. 1-6	xii. 9-14
12.—The gathering multitude	iii. 7-12	iv. 24-25
13.—The choice of the Twelve	iii. 13-19	x. 1—5
14.—A house divided against itself	iii. 20-30	xii. 22-32
15.—Mother and Brethren	iii. 31-35	xii. 46-50

Nevertheless, in spite of the new distribution of the material, the separate sections in Matthew will be found to be often in very close verbal agreement with the parallel passages in Mark. In the second half of the gospel, from *Matt.* xiv. onwards, the correspondence of order, as already mentioned, is much more complete.

(2) The rélation of the individual elements common to Mark and Matthew will be differently judged from different points of view, and most readers will probably be convinced that no single rule can embrace them all.

(*a*) It may be noted, in the first place, that there are some passages, occasionally of considerable length, in which the language is remarkably similar, not only in the reported words of Jesus, but in the narrative as well. Here is a brief instance:—

Mark i. 16-18.

And passing along *by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew* the *brother* of Simon *casting a net in the sea; for they were fishers. And* Jesus *said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you* to become *fishers of men. And straightway they left the nets and followed him.*

Matt. iv. 18-20.

And walking *by the sea of Galilee, he saw* two brethren, *Simon* who is called Peter, *and Andrew* his *brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And* he *saith unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left the nets and followed him.*

The narrative of the Last Supper and the Agony in Gethsemane, *Matt.* xxvi. 20-46, may be compared with that in *Mark* xiv. 17-42. For the most part the variations

are few and insignificant. Only the addition in *Matt.* xxvi. 25, to which there is no parallel either in Mark or Luke, attracts attention :—

> And Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Is it I, Rabbi? He saith unto him, Thou hast said.

It is obviously improbable that Jesus should have identified the traitor at table in the presence of the rest; and even Meyer gave up the incident as unhistorical. But the accord of the remainder of the two passages is too close, and extends over too great a length, to be due to independent reproduction from an oral source. Some kind of literary connection there must be, and Matthew's form is presumably the later; but it does not necessarily follow that the First Evangelist borrowed from the Second; he might be quoting from a common source. If our Mark is the result of successive editions, Matthew might have employed an earlier form.[1]

(*b*) Other cases show a tendency to abbreviate the

[1] An interesting case of apparent literary dependence will be found in the first description of the teaching of Jesus. Mark attaches it to the Synagogue scene at Capernaum; Matthew, who omits this altogether, appends it to the report of the Great Sermon :

Mark i. 22.	*Matt.* vii. 28-29.
And they *were astonished at his teaching; for he taught them as having authority, and not as* the *scribes.*	*And* . . . the multitude *were astonished at his teaching; for he taught them as having authority, and not as* their *scribes.*

It will be shown below that Matthew's representation of the Great Sermon must be regarded, taken altogether, as later. Does it not seem, then, as if he had borrowed Mark's words for his close, much as Luke adapted Mark's words on another occasion, *Luke* xx. 39, 40, and *Mark* xii. 32, 34; cp. chap. vi. § 1, 3, p. 211.

story by the omission of some detail more or less significant, as in the account of the paralytic, ix. 2 :—

> And behold they brought to him a man, sick of the palsy lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith saith unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven.

What special proof of faith had here been offered? Matthew has left out the striking circumstances by which the sufferer was brought into the Teacher's presence. Unable, because of the crowd, to enter the house, the bearers carried their burden to the roof, broke up the tiling round the court, and let him down into the space below. The story, told with fullest detail by the Second Evangelist, and condensed by the Third, positively loses its point as curtailed by the First. Through similar treatment the narrative of the Gadarene demoniacs becomes unintelligible. In Mark's version (which Luke here follows), the poor lunatic, when asked his name, answers 'My name is Legion, for we are many,' v. 9. Out of this reply grew the belief that Jesus cast out from him a multitude of devils, which were afterwards permitted to enter the swine.[1] But Matthew, converting the solitary madman into two, viii. 28, is obliged to suppress the name he wildly laid upon himself, and gives no explanation, therefore, how it was that enough devils could issue from the two demoniacs to enter into a whole herd of swine. A study of Matthew's narrative will show that it really presupposes a longer form of story, such as is now found in Mark or Luke. Similar abbreviation will be observed elsewhere, as in the account of the cure of the woman with an issue of blood, *Matt.* ix. 20-22, compared with *Mark* v. 25-34.

[1] Comp. chap. iv. § 2, 2, p. 147.

(*c*) Yet more significant is the occasional modification of some important circumstance in the midst of narratives otherwise substantially identical. The suppression of the inability of Jesus to do any mighty work at Nazareth, as chronicled by Mark, has been already noted.[1] In the following case two eminent apostles are in part, at any rate, relieved of the charge of ambition, by transferring to their mother the request which in Mark's account is addressed to Jesus by them.

Mark x. 35-39.

And there came near unto him James and John, the sons of Zebedee, saying unto him, Teacher, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall ask of thee. *And he said unto* them, *What would* ye that I should do for you? And they said unto him, Grant unto us that we *may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy* glory. *But Jesus said* unto them, *Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink?* or to be baptised with the baptism that I am baptised with? And they said unto him, *We are able.*

Matt. xx. 20-22.

Then came to him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, worshipping him, and asking a certain thing of him. *And he said unto* her, *What wouldest* thou? She saith unto him, Command that these my two sons *may sit, one on thy right hand, and one on thy left hand, in thy* kingdom. *But Jesus* answered *and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I* am about to *drink?* They say unto him, *We are able.*

Here, the First Evangelist, by preserving the original form of the Teacher's reply, 'Ye know not what *ye* ask,' betrays the fact that the petition was originally presented by the two brothers. But when the Twelve gathered

[1] See chap. v. § 3, 2 p. 188.

round them at the hands of later generations a reverence second only to that paid to Christ, the desire to shield the reputation of the distinguished pair worked on the tradition so as to represent the request as instigated and preferred by their mother.

(*d*) Most startling of all are the unique additions which Matthew's narrative alone contains. To the story of the stormy night upon the lake, when Jesus walked across the waves to the disciples, Matthew appends the striking anecdote of Peter's effort to do likewise, his danger and deliverance. The poetic significance of this picture as an allegory of faith has been already illustrated.[1] It is only necessary now to point to the slight literary modification made necessary by Matthew's episode, and the new conclusion which he supplies, in direct contradiction of the older tale.

Mark vi. 51.

And *he* went up unto them into the boat: and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves; for they understood not concerning the loaves, but their heart was hardened.

Matt. xiv. 32.

And when *they* were gone up into the boat, the wind ceased. And they that were in the boat worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

Another Peter story appears in the First Gospel, thrust into the very midst of a totally different narrative of the Second,—the legend of the piece of money found in the fish's mouth. The reader who will compare the following sequences, will see with what violence Matthew's addition has been accommodated in the text now represented by Mark.

[1] See chap. iv. § 4, 2, p. 160.

Matt. xvii. 24—xviii. 1.

And when ***they*** were ***come to Capernaum*** [they that received the half-shekel, &c.]. ***And when he*** came ***into*** ***the house*** . . .

In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, ***Who*** then ***is greatest*** in the kingdom of heaven.

Mark ix. 33, 34.

And ***they came to Capernaum; and when he*** was ***in the house*** he asked them, What were ye reasoning in the way? But they held their peace: for they had disputed with one another in the way, ***who was the greatest.***

One more instance may be quoted from the narrative of the Passion, all the more significant because in the entire record of the last events from the Paschal Supper, through the Trial, to the Crucifixion, Matthew and Mark are found again and again in harmony, while Luke pursues a highly independent course. The death of Jesus is followed in the First as in the Second Gospel by the symbolic rending of the Temple-veil.[1]

Mark xv. 37, 38.

And Jesus uttered a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

Matt. xxvii. 50, 51.

And Jesus cried again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit. And behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

At this point Matthew interrupts Mark's narrative with this remarkable insertion:—

And the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many.

It is hardly necessary to apply serious criticism to this marvellous embellishment of the solemn scene. It is not, like the rending of the veil, the imaginative expression

[1] In *Luke* xxiii. 45, 46, the order is reversed.

of what was believed to be a great spiritual event. It is pure wonder, of palpably late and legendary character.[1] All that it is needful to observe is the manner in which the older narrative was adapted to it.

Mark xv. 39.	*Matt.* xxvii. 54.
And when the Centurion which stood by over against him, *saw that he so gave up the ghost*, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.	Now the Centurion and they that were with him watching Jesus, when they *saw the earthquake and the things that were done*, feared exceedingly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

These facts of agreement, abbreviation, change of details, and insertion, seem plainly to indicate that our Gospel presents the bulk of the materials common to it with Mark in a later form than that in which they appear in the Second Gospel. It has been already pointed out that this is not, indeed, invariably the case.[2] But these and similar instances do not impair the probability that Matthew derived a large amount of narrative either from Mark, or from some evangelical source resembling it.

§ 3. Relation to Luke.

The relation of the First Gospel to the Third is even more intricate than that of the First and Second. They contain important matter in common, yet the arrangement of it varies greatly, and each is distinguished by no less important elements which the other has not. Moreover, where they deal with a common theme, such as the Birth

[1] For a remarkable Buddhist parallel see *The Bible in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 360, *note* 1.

[2] Comp. chap. v. § 2, 4, p. 185.

and Infancy or the Resurrection, their narratives prove on comparison incapable of reconciliation, and appear to have been coined in different mints.[1]

(1) The theory of the dependence of Matthew on Luke, or Luke on Matthew, has not only to explain the remarkable omissions of either in borrowing from the other, but also what appear the conflicting facts that in their common matter each seems at times to have the later form, and that neither can always claim to show the best arrangement, first one and then the other combining or distributing with the greater probability.

(*a*) It has already been shown, for example, that the miracles interpolated by Luke in the account of the reception by Jesus of the Baptist's messengers, vii. 21, have arisen out of a misinterpretation of the symbolic language of Jesus.[2] On the face of the matter, we should judge Matthew's simpler narrative to be the older. The two stories have undoubtedly a common source, or else, one Evangelist borrowed from the other. If Matthew borrowed from Luke, why did he—who elsewhere indulges in a superfluity of wonders—omit these miracles? Is it likely they have been added to Luke since Matthew was written? There is no evidence of such an interpolation; though as we know that similar additions did find their way into the Third Gospel afterwards (e.g. the appearance of the Angel in Gethsemane, xxii. 43, 44, the words 'Father, forgive them' on the cross, xxiii. 34),[3] it cannot be said that it is impossible.—But here is an opposite case: the consideration of the following passages will show that the insertion may be on the side of Matthew.

[1] Comp. chap. iii. § 1, 1-3. [2] Comp. chap. iv. § 3, 2, p. 153.
[3] Comp. chap. i. § 2, 4 *b*, p. 22.

Luke xi. 29, 30, 32.

And when the multitudes were gathering together unto him, he began to say, This generation is an evil generation, it seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah. For even as Jonah became a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of Man be to this generation.[1]

The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, there is more than Jonah here.

Matt. xii. 38-41.

Then certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered him, saying, Teacher, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet: *for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the whale; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, there is more than Jonah here.

We do not need the aid of Manuscripts to show us that the interpretation of the sign of Jonah in *Matt.* xii. 40 comes from the hand of some later annotator. Jesus is in the full tide of the Galilæan success. Not a word has yet been said of failure or death. The allusion would have been wholly unintelligible, just as the announcement—viewed in the light of prophetic prediction—is incorrect, for no version of the story of the resurrection which has come down to us, represents Jesus to have

[1] This verse has the air of a gloss, but it does not explain in what Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites. The explanation of Matthew seems to have been unknown to Justin. Cp. ***Dialogue with Trypho,*** 107, 108.

been three *nights* in the grave.—Here then seem undoubted instances where each Gospel in turn exhibits an earlier form of materials belonging also to the other. How can this be explained if Matthew always borrowed from Luke, or Luke from Matthew? If we may say that Luke was not acquainted with Matthew,[1] are we obliged, on the other hand, to conclude that Matthew was acquainted with Luke?

(*b*) The same results seem to follow from the examination of the combination or distribution of their common matter. The parallels to the discourse in *Matt.* xi. have been already noted;[2] their union by the compiler of the First Gospel appeared to bear a later air than their dispersion by the editor of the Third. In the next case, however, the presumption may be read the other way. When some friendly Pharisees warned Jesus to quit Galilee and escape from Herod's power, Luke, who alone reports the incident, adds to the reply of Jesus the well-known lament, xiii. 34, 35:

> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

It is startling, at first sight, that such a lament over the ancient city should be put into the Teacher's mouth in Galilee: it would have seemed more in place upon the spot. That is actually the locality assigned to it by Matthew, who attaches it to the close of the denunciation of the 'Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,' xxiii. 37-39.

[1] Comp. chap. vi. § 2, 1, p. 213. [2] See chap. vi. § 2, 2 *a*, p. 216.

But what is the meaning of the strange words 'how often would I have gathered thy children together?' Must we suppose, as many writers have done, that there is here an allusion to frequent visits of Jesus to the capital, such as the Fourth Gospel describes? Be it observed that the passage in Matthew is the sequel to another, xxiii. 34-36, in which Jesus is represented as sending prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom will be killed and crucified, while he winds up with what seems to be a reference to the murder of Zachariah by the Zealots in the Temple-court, two years before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans.[1] Plainly these words were not spoken by Jesus. But the same passage reappears in Luke, xi. 49-51, introduced by these words: 'Therefore also said the wisdom of God.' The whole now becomes clear. The entire passage is a quotation from some lost visions in which the divine Wisdom was the speaker. Wisdom sent forth the prophets and the scribes; Wisdom desired again and again to gather the children of the mother-city beneath her shelter, but they would not. Matthew rightly joins what Luke divides; or rather, Luke wrongly separates what Matthew offers as continuous. Each throws light upon the other: the First Evangelist shows us that the passages belong together: the Third supplies the important fact that they form a quotation from some vanished book:[2] but it is difficult to believe

[1] Another interpretation, however, supposes that the Zachariah here mentioned is the priest whose death by the order of Joash is related in 2 *Chron.* xxiv. 20-22. But his father was named Jehoiada.

[2] For another instance of the ascription to Jesus of words out of a later book, see chap. ii., § 3, 1, p. 83.

that this peculiar arrangement could have come about directly through either writer's use of the other's work.

(2) If the facts seem thus conflicting on the theory of direct dependence upon either side, is it possible to find any evidence as to priority or later date in the character of Matthew's additions to their common matter? When the two reports of the Great Sermon are set side by side, it is at once apparent that Matthew's is much the longer of the two. What is the nature of the material he thus incorporates? The whole discourse as edited by the First Evangelist follows the general order of the shorter version of the Third. Attention has been already called to the differences between the Blessings; no such variation, however, attaches to the statement of the demands on the disciple's love, which follows immediately in Luke, vi. 27-36, and forms in Matthew the closing contrast between the Old Law and the New, v. 38-48. At this point Matthew inserts two short collections, now contained in *Matt.* vi. The first of these sets forth the Christian view of the three forms of pious observance on which the Church of later times laid stress, almsgiving, prayer, and fasting. The thrice-repeated refrain, vv. 4, 6, 18, 'and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee,' has a kind of rhythmic air, unlike the primitive reports of the Teacher's speech. The insertion of the Lord's Prayer at this point, as part of a continuous address, seems much less natural than the account given by Luke of the request which drew it forth, and its more developed form points to a subsequent expansion.[1] Moreover, the directions concerning private prayer in the previous verses are marked by an indescribable difference in tone, when

[1] See chap. vi. § 2, 2 *b*, p. 220.

compared, for example, with the brief words in *Mark* xi. 24, 25. They seem rather to deal with recognised usage —from an elevated point of view, indeed—than to possess the freshness and spontaneity of the great prophet of the religion of the spirit. The instructions about fasting are even more out of accord with what is attributed to Jesus elsewhere. 'Why do not thy disciples fast like us?' cried the followers of John. 'Men do not put new wine into old wine-skins,' replied Jesus, *Mark* ii. 18, 22. Old forms cannot accommodate new principles and impulses. How the Church afterwards sought the Teacher's sanction for the practice, has been already shown in the addition to *Mark* ix. 29.[1] Have we not here also a similar reflection of ecclesiastical piety?—The discourse against worldliness, which forms Matthew's next section, vi. 19-34, can mostly be traced without difficulty in Luke, but not in his report of the Sermon. The correspondence is especially close in *Matt.* vi. 25-33 and *Luke* xii. 21-31. And here a piece of minute evidence must be allowed to carry weight. While Mark and Luke speak of the 'Kingdom of God,' and *never* of the 'Kingdom of Heaven,' Matthew habitually employs the latter term (34 times). The occurrence of another form of the phrase, therefore, arrests attention. Three times only does Matthew employ 'kingdom of God,' two of his passages having equivalents in Mark or Luke,[2] and being presumably, therefore, derived from them, or from the sources they employed. Now in the parallels just cited occur the following passages:—

[1] See chap. i. § 2, 4 *b*, p. 21, § 4, 4, p. 47.

[2] *Matt.* xii. 28 = *Luke* xi. 20; *Matt.* xix. 24 = *Mark* x. 25, *Luke* xviii. 25; *Matt.* xxi. 43.

Luke xii. 31.	*Matt.* vi. 33.
Howbeit *seek his kingdom and these things shall be added unto you.*	But *seek ye* first *his kingdom,* and his righteousness, *and* all *these things shall be added unto you.*

Matthew has certainly taken over the words either from Luke or from Luke's documents.—In Matthew's concluding section a noteworthy addition should be examined by the side of a counterpart from Luke:—

Luke xiii. 25-27.	*Matt.* vii. 21-23.
When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door saying, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not, whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets; and he shall say, I tell you I know not whence ye are; depart from me all ye workers of iniquity.	Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy name, and by thy name cast out devils, and by thy name do many mighty works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Different as these passages may seem at first sight, their common close shows that they are really related. They both declare the rejection of certain persons who will claim admission to the kingdom. But they are not the same persons in the two Gospels. The Third Evangelist has in view the unbelieving Jews who will plead too late that they were old acquaintances, for it was in their midst that Messiah had lived and taught; but the First applies the doom of Jesus to some of his own professing

followers, who have even been distinguished by prophetic gifts and the power to do mighty works. Our translation here veils a significant fact. The word rendered 'iniquity' in *Matt.* vii. 23 is not the same Greek word as that again represented by the same English, *Luke* xiii. 27: it is properly 'lawlessness.' Who are these who can prophesy in Christ's name, and work wonders—but are yet guilty of living without the Law? Are they not followers of the Apostle Paul, who refused to recognise the claim raised by the Jewish Christians for their ancient code? Independently, then, of the early assumption of Messianic authority which suggests that this passage is the utterance of the Church rather than of the Teacher, this reference to the strife of parties in an after day compels us to see in this, as we have seen before, a later handling of Luke's material by Matthew.[1] It may be observed, further, that Luke's sequel, in which Jesus announces to the Jews the admission of the Gentiles to the privileges which they have rejected, is unsuitable to Matthew's purpose, as he is dealing with the contrast between true and false professing Christians. He consequently transposes it elsewhere, assigning it to the incident of the centurion when Jesus has descended from the mountain and reached Capernaum.

Luke xiii. 28-29.	*Matt.* viii. 11-12.
There shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac,	And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit

[1] A similar case of the working up of earlier material into new forms is probably to be found in the parable of the Virgins, *Matt.* xxv. 1-13, the germ of which lies in the thought expressed in *Luke* xii. 35-36.

and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without. And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew introduces this sentence on the 'sons of the kingdom' with the statement 'Verily, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.' But the grounds for the statement are not obvious. Jesus had just healed a leper, who had shown the needed faith: he had been followed by crowds from every part of the country, even the most distant south: his career so far had been one series of triumphant displays alike of the belief of the people, and of his own power, *Matt.* iv. 23-25. Are not these words, therefore, placed by the First Evangelist too soon; are they not more fittingly assigned by the Third to a subsequent stage in the Teacher's career; and do we not thus find additional evidence of the priority of Luke's representation?

(3) Hitherto we have dwelt with the treatment by the First Evangelist of materials now occurring in the works of the Second, or the Third. But there are some passages in Matthew which appear to combine in the most singular manner elements of both Mark and Luke together. The parable of the mustard-seed, for instance, *Matt.* xiii. 31-32, begins in the narrative style of *Luke* xiii. 18-19, and ends with a description similar to that in *Mark* iv. 31-32. The account of John the Baptist, *Matt.* iii. 4-12, falls curiously apart into two portions, vv. 4-6, parallel with *Mark* i. 6, 5, *without counterpart in Luke*, and vv. 7-10, parallel with *Luke* iii. 7-9, *without counter-*

part in Mark, though ver. 11 is represented by *Mark* i. 7, 8. Thus :—

Mark i. 6, 5.

And John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leathern girdle about his loins, and did eat locusts and wild honey.

And there went out unto him all the country of Judæa, and all they of Jerusalem; and they were baptised of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Matt. iii. 4-10.

Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey.

Then went out unto him Jerusalem, and all Judæa, and all the country round about Jordan; and they were baptised of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you that God is able of these

Luke iii. 7-9.

He said therefore to the multitudes that went out to be baptised of him.

Ye offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come. Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you that God is able of these

stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And even now is the axe laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.	stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And even now is the axe also laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.

The narrative of the Temptation in Matthew is obviously in close accord with that of Luke. The variation in the order which gives the last place in Matthew to the offer of universal empire, forms a close so much more striking that it is difficult to see why the Third Evangelist, had he been borrowing from the First, should have weakened the effect by transposing it. But in reality, the dependence seems the other way. The conclusion in Matthew runs thus, iv. 11:—

> Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

This agrees with the statement in *Mark* i. 12, 'and the angels ministered unto him.' Either, therefore, Mark, omitting the specific trials, borrowed Matthew's ending, while Luke adopted the narrative of the trials, but substituted another conclusion; or Matthew combined in this case, as in the account of the Baptist, elements out of two different documents.

(4) The arguments by which the later character of our Matthew is rendered probable, are further confirmed by the remarkable additions which the First Gospel makes to their common story. Some instances of this have already been presented in comparing parallel passages

of Matthew and Mark, and of Matthew and Luke. But they occur on a larger scale at certain points in the narrative, which all three relate, and have sometimes a very peculiar character. In the account of the Passion, for example, Matthew alone specifies the terms of the bargain of Judas for the betrayal of Jesus, xxvi. 14-16; and Matthew only reports his suicide, xxvii. 3-10.[1] To this Gospel, likewise, belongs the application of the Jews to Pilate for a guard upon the grave, xxvii. 62-66, with its sequel, xxviii. 11-15, obviously intended as an answer to the charge still circulated when these stories were incorporated by the Editor, that the grave was found empty because the disciples had stolen the body of their Lord. And in the narrative of the Resurrection, fresh and startling episodes are followed by an unexpected conclusion. At the tomb, in presence of the two women, an earthquake occurs—such as had happened, according to the same Gospel, two days before beside the cross. The instructions to go into Galilee, xxviii 7, concur with Mark, as against Luke. But while Mark affirms that 'they said nothing to any one, for they were afraid,' and Luke states that they returned and told the eleven, who 'disbelieved them,' Matthew describes an actual meeting on the way with the risen Lord, who renews the promise that the brethren shall see him in Galilee. Ignoring, then, the description of the manifestation in Jerusalem that same afternoon, which leads direct in the Third Gospel to the Ascension, the First concludes with the solemn scene on the mountain in Galilee where Jesus

[1] On this passage, see below, § 4, 2, p. 277. Observe in ver. 8 the words 'unto this day,' which imply a long lapse of time, and clearly point to a date below the Apostolic age: cp. *Deut.* iii. 14, *Josh.* iv. 9, *1 Sam.* xxx. 25, &c., and *Matt.* xxviii. 15.

imparts to them his final charge, xxviii. 16-20.[1]—Compared with the greater simplicity of Mark and Luke, these additions have the air of later legendary elaborations: and they confirm the conclusion which emerges from the examination of the literary relations of the Synoptics, that the editor of Matthew employed Mark, perhaps in an early shape, together with a collection of the Teacher's sayings also used by Luke in a somewhat different form, though his acquaintance with the Third Gospel must be considered doubtful. Matthew, therefore, *in its present contents*, is presumably the latest of the three.

§ 4. The Person and Teachings of Messiah.

The enquiry which has led through many difficulties to the result just stated, deals with only one branch of the investigation. It remains to be asked whether the presentation of the person and teachings of Jesus is such as to require or even to permit the belief that Matthew followed instead of preceding Mark and Luke.

(1) Many indications will be found scattered through the First Gospel, heightening the general effect of Messiah's personality, emphasising his claims, and increasing the wonder of his deeds.

(*a*) The apparent independence of the Birth-story has been already noted. It seems to have no point of contact with Luke's. Is it possible to form any judgment as to its relative age? It may be observed that it appears to assume some previous acquaintance in the reader with the

[1] That this is the first appearance of Jesus to the eleven, according to Matthew, is plain from the remarkable statement that some of the disciples 'doubted.'

circumstance that Bethlehem was the birth-place of Jesus, ii. 1. The narrative of the Infancy may be said to have a wider range. Not only the poor unlettered shepherds from the country round greet the infant Christ. Wise men from the far East bring their costliest gifts. Messiah's future triumph over the secular forces of wealth and learning is heralded at the outset by these representatives of Gentile lands; and the homage thus offered by the world is contrasted with the simplicity of the home, and the hostility and violence of the civil power. The scope of thought seems larger in Matthew's story; but it is more clearly under the control of certain leading motives, notably the fulfilment of prophecy;[1] it has, consequently, a more artificial, a less spontaneous, character. It is the product not so much of spiritual imagination giving poetic form to great emotions, as of conscious reflection working out certain definite ideas. Does not this process arise at a later stage?

(*b*) It has been already pointed out that the First Gospel differs from the Second in describing Jesus as fully conscious of his Messianic dignity from the outset.[2] But Matthew alone among the Synoptics ascribes the recognition of it to John the Baptist. This, as we have seen,[3] is the meaning of the remarkable passage added to his narrative of the baptism, in which John pleads, 'I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest thou to me?' The heavenly voice no longer speaks to Jesus only: it describes him in the third person to the world at large, 'This is my beloved Son.' As in Luke, unfavourable incidents are omitted; no longer do mother and

[1] See below, 2, p. 276. [2] See chap. v. § 2. 3, p. 183.
[3] See chap. iii. § 2, 3, p. 119.

brothers seek to lay him beneath restraint; the absence of miracle at Nazareth is the result not of impotence but choice. The wonders he performed grow more wonderful; the daughter of Jairus is dead ere first her father comes to him; Peter is saved by him upon the waves; the fig-tree which he curses withers at once under his word; when the money-changers are expelled from the temple, there is room for the blind and the lame, and he heals them there, xxi. 14. There is, therefore, in Matthew no progress or development in the work or thought of Jesus. The whole is announced at the beginning. He declares upon the mount that he has come to fulfil the law and the prophets, v. 17, and he already foresees the day when he will judge the world, vii. 22. He is thus more than a new Moses issuing a second Law: he is more than the Son of David, sprung from the ancient line: he speaks from first to last as Son of God. Such a being could not with truth put aside the title 'good,' and the gentle deprecation of the Teacher in Mark and Luke no longer befits the Christ of Matthew. The following parallels will show that the alteration by the First Evangelist of the rich man's question as reported by the Second and Third, betrays after all the older form that lay behind:—

Mark x. 17, 18.

And as he was going forth into the way, there ran one to him, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus

Luke xviii. 18, 19.

And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And

Matt. xix. 16, 17.

And behold, one came unto him, and said, Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him,

said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, even God.	Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, even God.	Why askest thou me concerning that which is good? One there is who is good.

Here Matthew omits the title 'good' addressed to the Teacher, but inserts it into the substance of the interrogation itself, 'What *good thing* shall I do?' The change is insufficient. The answer of Jesus, even as preserved by Matthew, shows that the enquiry to which he was replying concerned good *persons*, not good *things*. It was too deeply fixed in the tradition to bear modification to suit the diverted application of the word 'good.' Do we not see here, in the very middle of their operation, the forces of later reverence moulding and shaping the older outlines of the Christ?

(*c*) This process is most palpably at work in the miraculous embellishments of the events upon the cross and at the grave, and the same tendency creates the final scene upon the mount in Galilee. There Jesus comes to the disciples, declares that all authority has been given to him in heaven and on earth, sends them forth to baptise into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and promises to be with them alway, even to the consummation of the age.[1] He is not, then, parted from

[1] The late character of this Baptismal Formula is well-known. It was not in use at the time of the compilation of the Book of Acts, ii. 38, viii 16, &c. Outside the New Testament the three terms first appear associated in the writings of Justin Martyr, and the 'Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,' where the injunction runs 'Baptize into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' chap. vii. In the *Hibbert Journal* for October, 1902, Mr. F. C. Conybeare gives reasons for thinking that its place in the gospel-text was not established till after the Council of Nicæ (325, A.D.)

them, as in Luke, and borne up into the sky: he remains, a perpetual presence with the faithful believer. What, then, was his 'coming'? Nothing, indeed, is said about clouds of glory; but Jesus is here invested with the rule which had been promised in Daniel to the mysterious figure 'like unto a son of man.' Nowhere in the Second or Third Gospel is the identification of Jesus with the Messianic Son of Man so completely effected in the words put on his lips as in the First. When Matthew's Jesus, then, comes after death to his followers, endowed with the sovereignty of the world, and directs his apostles to gather in the nations beneath his perpetual sway, the Second Advent is already here. But how long a time must have elapsed, before such an interpretation of the Church's hope could have been possible, and still more before it could thus clothe itself in symbolic form!

(2) The Messianic character of Jesus, which supplies so prominent a theme in this Gospel, is naturally approached from the Jewish side. The writer, therefore, keeps constantly before him the vindication of this claim from prophecy. Incident after incident occurs 'that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet.' Here lies the secret of the virgin-birth, i. 22. This was the reason which set the nativity in Bethlehem, ii. 5, and carried the parents with their son in flight to Egypt, ii. 15; while the same cause settled him at Nazareth, ii. 23, and in due time drew him to Capernaum, iv. 14, 15. The prophets had already determined the character of his ministry, xii. 16, 17, ensured him the lordship over disease, viii. 17, and provided that he should teach in parables, xiii. 34, 35, so that the dull ear should hear but not understand, xiii. 14. There lay the

warnings of his impending fate, and the promise of his future triumph, xvi. 21; there was the prediction of his entry into Jerusalem amid the popular acclaim, xxi. 5, and there the warrant for his arrest, xxvi. 56. Even Messiah's price had been arranged beforehand, xxvii. 9. and a mistranslation seems to have led to the story of the purchase of the potter's field, xxvii. 7.[1] Finally this motive led the executioners ignorantly to offer him wine mingled with gall, instead of the kindly stupefying myrrh; and to keep the prophets' time the earth opened and yielded up Messiah's form. The whole biography of the Christ, then, from birth to death, the scene of his labours, the scope of his power, the method of his teaching, the reception of his message, the hour of welcome and the day of doom, was written beforehand in the Scriptures, for those who held the key to their mysteries. It was only necessary to put the passages together, and the incidents followed in due course. The framework of the wondrous story was prepared beforehand; the lines of Messiah's life were shaped; the great acts of the drama were laid out already; even the details fell into the prescribed order; and prophecy thus not only became the standard by which the claims of the Christ might be tested, it generated the very occurrences which satisfied its own demands.

(3) The Gospel which thus views Messiah as belonging to the Jews rather than to mankind, naturally describes his appeal as presented first exclusively to them. At the outset the kingdom is to be preached to them alone; and

[1] The whole passage, xxvii. 3-10, is full of difficulties, independently of the circumstance that it does not agree with another version of the fate of Judas, *Acts* i. 18.

the disciples are despatched with injunctions designed to secure the salvation of Israel, even though the rest of the world perish, X. 5-7, 23 :—

> Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. . . . . Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come.

The Syrophœnician woman is informed that her daughter is beyond the pale of his healing help, XV. 24 :—

> I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

On the other hand, Messiah's rejection at the hands of his own people, and their consequent exclusion from the kingdom, are announced almost from the beginning, immediately after the Great Sermon, through the incident of the Centurion, viii. 11, 12; while it is emphasized in an explanatory addition, peculiar to Matthew only, at the close of the parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen, xxi. 43 :—

> Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

The effect produced by the indifference or hostility of the Jews is further heightened by the singular proceedings before Pilate's judgment seat. The procurator's wife sends a message interceding for the prisoner, because she has 'suffered many things in a dream because of him.' The incident, considering the eminence and public repute of the victim, cannot be pronounced impossible,—yet its probability is strained until it snaps

by the immediate occurrence of a second, the public disavowal of all responsibility by the supreme representative of law and order, in the symbolic act of washing his hands. The method of Roman administration, and the known character of Pilate, stamp this detail as a pictorial expression of the desire to acquit the Gentile power of a share in Messiah's death, and fix the guilt on Israel. Matthew, and Matthew only, attributes to the crowd the passionate cry 'His blood be on us and on our children!' xxvii. 25.

(4) While Messiah comes to fulfil the law and the prophets, his own people will not receive him, and the privileges of the kingdom are bestowed elsewhere. A kind of contradiction is thus set up between Jew and Gentile, which is naturally reflected in the conditions laid down for the life of the believer. When Matthew's Jesus speaks as the flower and consummation of the purposes of God for Israel, he recognises the permanence of the Law, and even enforces the observance of the vast mass of traditional ordinances connected with it by the diligence of the Rabbis, v. 17, 18, xxiii. 2, 3:—

> Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.
>
> The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; all things, therefore, whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe.

The discharge of legal obligation by Messiah himself is implied in the story of the payment of the Temple-tax by the shekel found in the fish's mouth, xvii. 24-27. To those who neglect or repudiate its claims, no mercy will be shown, not even though they possess gifts of prophecy

or healing, vii. 23.[1] Its abolition was the signal for the abandonment of all restraints; those who thus caused others to offend were no better than the tares; at the end of the age they must be gathered up and burned. The parable in which this doom is pronounced, xiii. 41, on all who do 'lawlessness,' appears to be a development of the simpler form in *Mark* iv. 26-29. But it has been adapted to a different moral condition. The growth of the kingdom is impeded; the fair field of the Church is no longer, as in its first days, the scene only of faithful endeavour; it is disturbed by disorders, weeds have grown apace; the 'enemy' has marred, he cannot wholly ruin, Messiah's work; and the true believers must wait in patience for the event which will release them from the companionship of the 'lawless' and secure the victory for the legally good. Like the 'dogs,' the 'swine,' and the 'false prophets' of the Great Sermon, vii. 6, 15, the 'tares' speak of the difficulties and dangers of the later Church.

(5) But the other motive of the Gospel, in which the logic of events is recognised, and the Gentiles are welcomed into the kingdom, gives a broader scope to Messiah's work, and pleads for a piety of a different type. Even round his cradle at Bethlehem the Wise men from the East do homage. When he settles at Capernaum, among the mingled population round the lake, this is in the writer's mind as he justifies Messiah's choice by a prophetic reference to 'Galilee of the Gentiles,' where 'the people which sat in darkness saw a great light,' iv. 15, 16. The Gentiles are not unwilling to respond; for when the report of the new preaching goes forth beyond the Galilæan hills into 'all Syria,' the crowd that gathered

[1] Comp. § 3, 2, p. 266.

round the Teacher is reinforced from the dwellers in the Gentile cities of the Decapolis, iv. 24, 25. The Centurion's faith draws forth in Capernaum the promise including the whole world from east to west; and when Messiah, coming after death, sends forth his disciples a second time, it is with the comprehensive charge to 'make disciples of all the nations,' xxviii. 19. The scope of the Gospel is thus enlarged from Israel to embrace humanity. This may be called Evangelical Universalism. That this represents the true thought of Jesus, whatever be the symbols by which it is conveyed, cannot be doubted. And accordingly this Gospel also contains the broadest utterances regulating the conduct of believers as men, apart from all questions of nationality, of divine election, of special privilege, or the requirements of the Mosaic code. The standard of conformity to the demands of Scribes and Pharisees is withdrawn as insufficient, v. 20:—

> Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

The doctrine of the Great Sermon is indeed a doctrine of righteousness by works rather than of righteousness by faith. But the 'works' are those of justice, mercy, and peace, instead of tithes of mint and anise. Twice does Jesus state the essence of 'the law and the prophets,' it lies in active beneficence, vii. 12, in the love of God and man, xxii. 37-40. These constitute the fair wedding garment which every guest must wear at Messiah's marriage-feast, xxii. 11, 12, cp. *Rev.* xix. 7-9. And when, at the great judgment-day, all nations are gathered before the Son of Man, neither is faith in Christ the test

of acceptance, nor observance of the Law. 'How have you ministered to human need?' is the only question: 'have you seen in each sufferer a brother man, and done to him a brother's part?' In this lies the proof of faithfulness; here is the fullest statement of Ethical Universalism. Truly has the First Gospel been called a 'Gospel of contradictions.'

(6) Matthew, then, like Luke, has sought to harmonise opposing tendencies: and the words of the Teacher in the First Gospel even more clearly than in the Third reflect the conflicts of succeeding times. It is not surprising, therefore, that we should actually meet, in Matthew only, with the word by which the Christian communities were afterwards known, viz. the 'Church.' The idea is in some sense present in the background much oftener than the term itself appears. It lurks in the description of the usages of piety, alms, prayer, and fasting. It hides behind the indications of growing corruption, of waning faith, of false teaching, of the necessity of making terms in some way with the world's wickedness until the end of the age. But it becomes explicit in the provision made for the treatment of offenders who refuse penitence, or submission, and must be cast out, xviii. 17; and it acquires especial prominence in the startling passage added by Matthew only to the common tradition in Mark and Luke, after Peter's acknowledgement of Jesus as the Messiah, xvi. 17-19:—

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys the kingdom of heaven: and

whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

This is one of the peculiar incidents, like the attempt to walk upon the waves, or the piece of money in the fish's mouth, of which Peter is the hero in the First Gospel. It is the culmination of them all, constituting him, in some sense, the foundation of the Church, and conferring on him the special right of pronouncing admission into the kingdom of heaven. In this passage lies the germ of what was afterwards to be known in the Roman Church as the Primacy of Peter, to be developed in our own day into the Vatican Decrees. Many circumstances tend to show the unhistorical character of this passage. The surname Peter, according to *Mark* iii. 16, was really conferred at a much earlier date. The position of rule here assigned to the Apostle, is in reality opposed to the reiterated teaching of the Master, 'whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister.' It is, indeed, in part neutralised by a subsequent saying where all the Twelve are empowered to 'bind and loose,' xviii. 18, so that Peter's prerogative was to be shared by all, and it is wholly inconsistent with the fact that Jesus immediately after designates him 'Satan.' It is in striking contrast with his later conduct, his denial of Jesus at Jerusalem, his weakness in abandoning the Gentile cause at Antioch, *Gal.* ii. 11-12. Paul, certainly, knew nothing of such a claim. He affirms his own equality with the Twelve in the clearest terms; and when he disapproved of Peter's conduct, he relates that he 'withstood him to his face.' Not till later times was the Church regarded as built on the foundation of prophets and apostles; and the first external testimony to the

existence of these words on the part of other writers does not reach us until shortly before the year 200 A.D.[1] They arose, it would seem, in the course of the second century, when the growing pretensions of the Bishop of Rome sought sanction at the hands of the divine Lord of the Church.

§ 5. Date and Authorship.

(1) The Gospel according to S. Matthew has revealed on examination the presence of manifold elements among its contents. It has been aptly described as a kind of 'primitive Gospel harmony.' Its Editor seems to have employed sources now known to us through Mark and Luke, if not these Gospels themselves. Drawn from various quarters, its materials are marked by different tendencies, and the whole compilation is on one side Jewish and legal, on the other moral, humanitarian, and universal. Yet the prominence assigned to Jewish motives and thoughts implies that the writer was himself a Jew, and that he addressed those among his own nation who might yet be won for the kingdom, or who had already entered its fold. The character of Jesus as Son of David, emphasised in the preliminary genealogy by tracing his descent through the line of kings, is brought again and again into view. The institutions of the established religion are mentioned with a certain tenderness; Jerusalem is the city of the great king, v. 35; the temple service is superior to all rule of

[1] They are employed on behalf of Rome in the little treatise against gambling, *De Aleatoribus*. The early date of this work has been recently demonstrated by Dr. Harnack, who has ascribed its composition to Victor, Bishop of Rome. 188-199 A.D.

days, xii. 5; but the disciple in danger of his life must still respect the Sabbath, xxiv. 20. Jewish usages, therefore, need no elaborate explanation, they will be understood by those who have been trained to the knowledge of the Law. But the words of ancient prophecy or of native speech are not so intelligible; the Hebrew Immanuel, i. 23, the Aramean Golgotha, xxvii. 33, the verse of the Psalm uttered upon the cross, xxvii. 46, all need interpretation. The Jews and Jewish Christians for whom the First Evangelist thus retells the sacred story, are not themselves resident in Palestine; they belong to the Dispersion; they speak the Greek of the Mediterranean lands. The idea of the Theocratic kingdom for Israel has nearly faded away; only once do its echoes sound in the words with which Matthew's Jesus alone assures the disciples that their sacrifices shall not go unrecognised, xix. 28:—

> Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[1]

(2) Few direct indications help in any way to mark the Gospel's date. The discourse on the last things in chap. xxiv. seems to preserve much of the old language of the little Apocalypse written shortly before the fall of Jerusalem.[2] The statement in the parable that the king 'destroyed those murderers and burned their city,' xxii. 7, appears to allude to the Roman capture, and we are thus carried down at the earliest to the year 70 A.D. But indirect evidence points us to decades later still. There

[1] Comp. *Luke* xxii. 30; and see above, chap. vi. § 5, 1, p. 235.

[2] Comp. chap. v. § 4, 4, p. 197.

is the growth of legend, such as that of the earthquake at the crucifixion, or the death of Judas. There is the rising ecclesiastical consciousness, which needs warnings against false teachers and heretical sects, which arranges penitential discipline, and admits the primacy of Peter. There is the broad view of universal human morality, which, being implicit in the thought of the Teacher, has become explicit and capable of application to 'all the nations.' There is the baptismal formula with its three holy names, advancing on the experience of the Apostle Paul who was 'baptised into Christ' and the usage of the apostolic baptism 'into the name of Christ.' And lastly, side by side with the most vivid expectation of Messiah's advent, before the disciples should have gone over the cities of Israel, x. 23, before those standing round the speaker should have tasted death, xvi. 28, 'immediately' after the tribulation of those days, before this generation pass away, xxiv. 29, 34—side by side with all this is the decline of the hope of an external and visible arrival, and its gradual transference into a present spiritual experience, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,' xviii. 20, 'Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age,' xxviii. 20. These signs of later date, appearing in the repeated modification of older material, and the addition of new, need not all, however, be attributed to one age, or to one hand: they may represent tendencies of different times, and their incorporation in the older contents of the Gospel may have taken place by degrees.

(3) The external testimony, scanty as it is, really points in this direction, for Papias is reported by Eusebius to

have made the following statement, on the authority, apparently, of the Elder John :—

Matthew composed the oracles (of the Lord) in the Hebrew dialect, and each one (i.e. each reader) interpreted them as he could.

The peculiar term 'oracles' (*logia*) is commonly supposed to denote a collection of the sayings of Jesus. But it can hardly have been limited merely to his spoken words, for these would often have been unintelligible without some reference to the circumstances of their utterance. How much in the shape of narrative concerning occasion and event may have been connected with them, we cannot tell: but they do not seem to have been arranged in any special sequence, and can hardly have attained the scope of even the briefest of our Gospels, which relates Messiah's ministry with well-established order. The compilation was made in the vernacular Aramean. No regular translation for Greek readers accompanied it, every one was obliged to translate it for himself as best he could. Now hardly anyone supposes our Matthew to be a translation ; it is an original Greek work; whether Papias, however, was acquainted with it, and regarded it as one of the translations, or supposed it to have superseded all other independent versions, is unknown. In our ignorance of the real character of Matthew's 'oracles,' we can frame no judgment of the stages between the first collection and our Gospel. Certain it is that the work in its present form is not apostolic. Its artificial arrangement, its occasional vague expressions—so different from the precision of an eye-witness[1]—its indications of a later

[1] 'Their scribes,' vii. 29, 'their cities,' xi. 1, as if the writer in no way belonged to the country.

stage of doctrine and Church-life—all forbid us to identify the First Evangelist with one of the companions of Jesus. It may be that the Gospel now bearing Matthew's name embodies much or indeed all of his collection of the Master's sayings. As one or another rendered it from Aramean into Greek, additions would be recorded, and these may in time have been gathered up and re-cast under the editorial plan which can be so clearly traced in the present Matthew. But the steps of this process can be longer followed; and the first decisive evidence of the existence of the Gospel, much as we know it now, is in the writings of Justin the Martyr in the second century.

(4) Connected with an apostolic name, the First Gospel possessed a certain distinction in the early Church; and some dim recollection of the story of its growth may have also helped to mark it out as the place of deposit for successive layers of the evangelical tradition. The history of the Old Testament affords abundant illustration of this method. When piety was still fresh and creative, its products were again and again ranged under honoured names, and added to recognised collections, rather than left to struggle for acceptance by themselves. Time after time were new laws inserted in the Mosaic code; new Psalms were assigned to David; new Proverbs allotted to Solomon; new Prophecies ascribed to Isaiah. The modern hymn-collector does not scruple to omit or alter or add, so as to bring the poems he selects into accord with the doctrinal conceptions and the religious sentiments of the worshippers who will use them. The Gospel tradition was treated in the same way in the early Church. It was a great

collection of devotional material, and it was a work of piety to expand its contents as fresh elements appeared, or to combine them in new forms, and modify them for unexpected needs. Thus the story of Jesus re-told again and again, passed out of the hands of a single author or editor. It expressed the feelings not of the individual narrator, but of the community. It took up into itself seeming contradictions, and as years and generations went on, it gave them shelter beneath the memory of the Master in which their antagonisms died away. The sublime figure of the Christ, portrayed to us by the First Three Evangelists, was, in a certain sense, created by the Church. But if, in turn, we ask what was the moral and religious power by which the Church was created, only one answer is possible; it was the personality of Jesus, his faith, his truth, his love.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST THREE GOSPELS AND THEIR HISTORICAL VALUE.

The processes of modern investigation into the structure and composition of the First Three Gospels suffice to show that they contain elements of different origin and value. They are the survivors out of a larger number of records, more or less complete, which disappeared with the advance of years, as the Church gradually raised the books which now open our New Testament into the chief places of authority and trust. In their present form they are none of them derived immediately from companions and followers of Jesus. They are the result of the endeavours of the second generation after he had passed away to portray the significance of his life and work. Their materials may be traced back (according to early tradition) to two primitive documents: (1) the collection of Christ's Sayings originally made in the vernacular Aramean by Matthew; and (2) the reminiscences of his career noted down by Mark from the lips of Peter. These records may be assigned with great probability to the decade which preceded the fall of

Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. The narrative of the colloquies of Jesus during his last days at the capital seems based on first-hand recollection of his language to one after another of the hostile parties which environed him. Only here and there does some touch, like the burning of the city in *Matt.* xxii. 7, suggest that the great catastrophe is present to the narrator's mind. The traditions of the Teacher's words in this brief week were first gathered into some sort of coherence in the early church at Jerusalem, the source of all (or almost all) subsequent recollections. They were formed, that is to say, upon the spot; and they were less subject to the intrusion of alien matter than the remembrance of the Galilean ministry, which was cut off altogether from its local base. That even these traditions might incorporate elements from foreign sources, whether written [1] or symbolic,[2] has been already argued. But their presence does not impair the general conclusion that there is here a narrative which is in the broad sense of the word historical. From different points of view, however, this conclusion has been recently challenged, and it may be worth while to conclude this exposition of the origins of the First Three Gospels with a brief attempt to justify their acceptance as representations—however inadequate for purposes of biography in the modern sense—of the actual life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

[1] As in the prophecy on the Mount of Olives, *Mark* xiii. and parallels, see p. 197.

[2] As in the stories of the cursing of the fig-tree, p. 156, and the rending of the temple-veil, p. 204.

§ 1. Jesus as a Creation of Myth.

In what year was Jesus born? In what year did he die? A modern biographer deems such information indispensable for accurately placing his hero in connexion with the events of his time. But neither of these questions can be definitely answered from the Gospels, and, strange to say, it does not really matter. The earliest of the three great Creeds, which bears so erroneously the name of the Apostles, is equally silent about a precise date, and only links the person of Jesus with secular history by the statement that he 'suffered under Pontius Pilate.' Now, the years of Pilate's governorship are known: he was Roman procurator in Judæa and Samaria from 27 to 37 A.D. According to the unanimous tradition of all four Gospels the death of Jesus falls in this period. Is it possible to determine its date more nearly?

(1) At the outset a difficulty arises on a comparison of the Fourth Gospel with the First Three. The former extends the ministry of Jesus over three Passovers, involving a duration of more than two years[1]; while the synoptic tradition represents Jesus as attending but one, when he was arrested and crucified. If the time of the opening of the ministry can be approximately fixed, the year of its close will shift according to the estimate of its length. Thus Prof. Sanday ascribes to it, on the authority of the Fourth Gospel, a period of nearly two and-a-half years[2]; while Prof. von. Soden is content with one.[3]

[1] Unless, with Prof. C. A. Briggs, the arrangement of the Gospel is regarded as topical and not chronological, and the three passovers are all identified, *New Light on the Life of Jesus*, 1904, p. 54

[2] Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, article, 'Jesus Christ.'

[3] *Encyclopædia Biblica*, 'Chronology,' col. 802.

Both start with the statement of *Luke* iii. 1, which places the preaching of John the Baptist in the fifteenth year of the Emperor Tiberius. But this date is itself open to different interpretations. Is the beginning of his reign reckoned from the time when he attained sole power, on the death of Augustus in August A.D. 14; or may it have been assigned to the date of the special enactment by which a position of co-ordinate jurisdiction in the provinces was conferred upon him during the life-time of the elder Emperor, perhaps (according to Mommsen) in A.D. 11?[1] On the first basis Prof. von. Soden places the appearance of Jesus as a public Teacher at the end of 28 A.D., or more probably early in 29; and the Passover at which he suffers, falls in 30. On the latter supposition Dr. Sanday and Mr. Turner date the baptism of Jesus late in 26 or at the opening of 27; and fix the Crucifixion at the Passover in A.D. 29.[2]

These diversities suffice to show how far the Gospels are from satisfying the rigorous demands of modern biography. But they do not plunge the whole career of Jesus into uncertainty, or require us to reject the Gospel narratives as altogether unhistorical. Yet this, if we are to believe another student, Mr. J. M. Robertson, is the result of modern critical investigation. The whole story of the Evangelists is woven out of myths, whether it report the words or the deeds of Jesus of Nazareth.

'The one tenable hypothesis left to us is still that of a preliminary

[1] Cp. Turner, in Hastings' *Dict. of the Bible*, 'Chronology,' vol. i. p. 406.

[2] In this respect modern criticism has receded from the view of Keim, who argued with much confidence that Jesus was baptised in 34, and died in 35.

Jesus "B.C.," a vague cult-founder such as the Jesus ben Pandira of the Talmud, put to death for (probably anti-Judaic) teachings now lost, round whose movement there may have gradually clustered the survivals of an ancient solar worship of a Babe Joshua son of Miriam; and round whose later composite cult, in which Jesus *not* of Nazareth figured for Paul as a mere crucified Messiah, a speechless sacrifice, there appear to have coalesced various other doctrinal movements which perhaps incorporated some actual utterances of several Jesuses of Messianic pretensions, Nazarite and anti-Nazarite, but certainly also gathered up, generation after generation, many documentary compositions and pragmatic and didactic fictions.'[1]

The Talmudic evidence (which has recently been discussed by Mr. G. R. S. Mead in his elaborate enquiry *Did Jesus live* 100 B.C.?[2]) is summarised below, § 3: it must suffice here to glance at the methods by which the whole Gospel story is reduced to myth.

(2) The scenes at Jerusalem, it has already been observed, are related with a coherence and simplicity which imply an early type of tradition formed upon the spot. That is not, however, the judgment of our critic. They open with the entry of Jesus into the capital in the character of Messiah, riding upon a colt, and accompanied by an enthusiastic crowd, some of whom spread their garments on the road after the fashion of Oriental

[1] *Christianity and Mythology* (1900), p. 308; cp. p. 395, and the later treatise of the same author, *Pagan Christs* (1903). Both of these works show wide reading; but they are disfigured by a recklessness of assertion, and a serious incapacity to estimate historical conditions, which greatly impair their value. It is of course impossible here to meet all the statements in these two elaborate books. Specimens only of the method of assertion—it cannot be called proof—can be presented within the available limits.

[2] London and Benares, 1903.

homage. This is bluntly dismissed with the assertion, 'Not a single item of the story is credible history.'[1] For this plump rejection no positive evidence is offered. But a solution is suggested founded on the quotation of the well-known passage from Zechariah in *Matt.* xxi. 5,

> Tell ye the daughter of Zion,
> Behold, thy king cometh unto thee,
> Meek, and riding upon an ass,
> And upon a colt the foal of an ass.

It has already been shown how under the influence of this prophecy the First Evangelist introduces a second animal into the story, and actually mounts Jesus upon both.[2] Not so, urges Mr. Robertson, this is not a detail due to a misapplication of ancient language, it is the very essence of the whole. For did not Dionysos, when made mad by Juno, meet in his wanderings two asses, mounted on one of which he passed a vast morass, or river, and so reached the temple of Dodona, where he recovered his senses?[3] What can be clearer than that Dionysos on the two asses (he was only on one just before) is simply the sun in Cancer,[4] the sign which marks his downward

[1] *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 367.

[2] See *ante*, chap. i. p. 42, vii., p. 252.

[3] *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 368.

[4] 'The Greek sign for Cancer in the Zodiac was two asses.' This is one of Mr. Robertson's exaggerated statements. According to the poem of Aratus (about 270 B.C.) the fourth sign of the Zodiac was *karkinos*, Latin *cancer*, the 'Crab.' This constellation contained two small stars, a northern and a southern, known as the *onoi*, Latin *asini*, or 'asses.' Between them was a nebular brightness designated the 'manger' (*Arat.* 890-96). The sun has not yet, however, reached his greatest heat. It is 'when he begins to travel with the Lion' that his 'chariot is most scorching' (*Arat.* 146-150).

course, as he passes the period of his raging heat! Similarly Jesus on the two asses 'signifies that the Sun-God is at his highest pitch of glory, and is coming to his doom.' It has first to be proved that Dionysos rode on two asses, as well as that Jesus is the Sun-God, and this is not accomplished by showing that later Christian mythology took up into itself elements originally of solar significance, such as the assignment of the birth of Jesus to December 25th.[1] All the mythologies, Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, Greek, meet already in Mr. Robertson's pages, though without any explanation of the process by which they coalesce in Christ: assertion takes the place of argument: the sequel to the story of the triumphal entry, when Jesus enters the temple and indignantly drives out the traffickers, is plainly untrue, because Osiris is figured on the monuments beside the Nile bearing in his hand a flail or scourge![2] The incidents of the fatal night, 'the crown of thorns, the scourging, and

[1] Mr. Robertson attributes this to a date far too early, *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 331. It was not till the middle of the fourth century that the Roman Church set apart the *natalis solis invicti* (Dec. 25) as the anniversary of the Saviour's birth (see Usener's article on the Nativity, *Encycl. Bibl.* col. 3346). Mr. Robertson further overlooks the fact that the Epiphany festival (January 6) originally commemorated the baptism of Jesus. This was the date when the Messianic sonship of Jesus began, according to one scheme of early Christian doctrine (*ante*, p. 117), while other schools carried it back to his conception and birth. The first evidence of a festival of the baptism occurs in the second century among the followers of the Gnostic Basilides, in Egypt, who are said by Clement of Alexandria to have observed it on Tubi 11 or 15 (January 6 or 10). Commemoration of the physical birth gradually took the place of the spiritual.

[2] *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 358.

the kingly title, may without hesitation be held to be mythical,' partly because they are not mentioned by the apostle Paul,[1] and partly because the crown of thorns finds its 'root-motive' in the nimbus of the Sun-God. By what process the rays of glory are metamorphosed into a chaplet of pain we are not told.[2] If Simon of Cyrene is compelled to carry the cross, Simon is the 'nearest Greek name-form to Samson' who carried off the gate-posts of Gaza, as Herakles carried two pillars to Gades (Cadiz). Simon, therefore, is a Sun-God, too.[3] But the names Simon and Samson have absolutely no linguistic connexion. No attempt is made to show any analogy between the exploits ascribed to Samson and Herakles, on the one hand, and the usage which allowed the soldiers escorting Jesus to force Simon to relieve their exhausted prisoner, on the other. And how it happened that he had two sons, Alexander and Rufus, whose names were presumably known to some of *Mark's* readers, or the Evangelist would not have thought it worth while to mention them, the mythological interpreter does not inform us. The crucifixion itself, also, though Messiah crucified is admitted even by Mr. Robertson to be the central figure of the Apostle Paul's whole thought, is as unhistorical as the rest. The Jesus of Paul was the Jesus Ben Pandîra who was hanged a century before the Christian era.[4] And so

[1] *Ibid.* 397.

[2] Mr. Andrew Lang cites two cases from Scottish history, where pretenders to royalty were 'mocked by being endued with symbols of royalty. Wallace was crowned at his trial with laurel; Atholl was tortured to death with a red-hot iron crown.' *Magic and Religion*, 1901, p. 203.

[3] *Ibid.* p. 401.

[4] *Ibid.* pp. 402-414. See below § 3.

out of bad philology and perverted history the figure of Jesus is reduced by these methods to a dim tradition a hundred years older than the customary date.

(3) A few words may be said concerning a further suggestion founded upon the brilliant combinations of the author of *The Golden Bough*.[1] Mr. Frazer does not dispute the general facts of the Gospel narratives of the Passion, but he attempts to give them a new interpretation, which may throw light on the subsequent belief in the Deity of Christ. Reduced to its simplest form, this theory supposes that at the feast of Purim which might fall a few weeks before Passover, the Jews in Jerusalem had the practice of parading a criminal as a mock king, who was crowned, scourged, and hanged. This practice was a survival of a long series of usages, ultimately traceable through Persia to Babylonian ritual; when the kings of Babylon were annually sacrificed as incarnations of the god of vegetable life who required a constant succession of vigorous human forms in whom to dwell. When Jesus was crucified, the part of this dying god was thrust upon him, and thus 'impressed upon what had been hitherto mainly an ethical mission the character of a divine revelation culminating in the passion and death of the incarnate Son of a heavenly Father.'[2] With the extraordinary pile of hypotheses required to support this view we are not here concerned.[3] Of the annual sacrifice of the kings of Babylon at one end there is, of course, no historic trace, nor is there any direct evidence of the

[1] Second Edition, 1900.

[2] *Golden Bough*[2], iii. p. 197.

[3] Students should of course consult the acute and witty essays of Mr. Lang in *Magic and Religion*.

yearly rite at the other end, at Jerusalem, except the narrative in the Gospels; nor does the writer explain how what ought to have happened at Purim was transferred in that particular year to Passover. The theory, however, has suggested to Mr. Robertson the notion that the story of Christ's Supper and Passion originated in a sacred drama or mystery play. The narrative is 'clearly unhistorical,'[1] apparently because so many decisive events happen in one night. It is impossible here to discuss the details of the sequence, which are related differently by our authorities: and it is certainly very remarkable that there should be a direct conflict between the First Three Gospels and the Fourth as to what the night was, on which Jesus was arrested and tried. Did it follow the paschal supper, or did it precede it? The Synoptics represent Jesus as 'eating the passover' with his disciples, *Mark* xiv. 16, *Matt.* xxvi. 19, *Luke* xxii. 15; while acccording to *John* xviii. 28, the lamb was not yet slain, and the Fourth Gospel teaches alike by suggestion, xix. 36, and by actual designation, that Jesus was himself in reality as well as in figure the lamb which taketh away the sin of the world, i. 29. This discrepancy, however, is not sufficient to destroy our conviction that in the narrative of the crucifixion the Gospels relate an actual occurrence. The aspect of swiftness which the critic emphasises, the reduction of the story to a rapid succession of scenes, is due to the fact that the narrative is based upon recital. Over and over again has the solemn tale been told to successive groups of disciples. In these repetitions the detail that is not essential drops away; there is

[1] *Pagan Christs*, p. 197.

left only the sense of advance to an inevitable doom; and the narrator never pauses till the goal is reached. To stay the hurrying course, to describe Messiah's looks in presence of the Sanhedrin or before Pilate's tribune, would have been a kind of impertinence. Elements of myth there no doubt are; the angel in the garden, the rent veil of the temple, the saints who rise from their graves and walk into the streets of Jerusalem, do not belong to history. But no mystery play, investing its hero with a halo of dignity, would have ascribed to him for his last words the desolate cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

§ 2 The External Evidence.

If the evidence of the Gospels be discredited, what testimonies come to us from without? Are there any allusions to the founder of Christianity independent of the New Testament? Such references are naturally scanty, but they are not wholly wanting. In Roman authors they first appear early in the second century.

(1) Writing to his imperial master, Trajan, the younger Pliny[1] describes (perhaps about 112 A.D.) the progress of Christianity in the distant regions of Pontus and Bithynia. The temples had been deserted, and the altars had grown cold and silent with neglect. The new faith was advancing rapidly, and it was necessary to decide what treatment should be awarded to its professors. They seemed to be harmless folk enough, for all their fault (by their own account) consisted in this—they were wont to meet together before sunrise on a fixed day, and sing

[1] *Letters*, xcvi. edited by E. G. Hardy, 1889.

a hymn to Christ as to a God: they pledged themselves to commit no crime, but to abstain from theft, robbery, adultery, perjury, and dishonesty; they afterwards joined in a common meal, which was open to all, but had been discontinued since Trajan's edicts prohibiting such club-meetings. When Pliny tortured two deaconesses to find out what mischief might lie behind, he discovered nothing worse than a depraved and violent superstition, into the origin of which he made no enquiry. His friend Tacitus, however, was better informed. The composition of the 15th book of his *Annals* belongs to a slightly later date than Pliny's letter, possibly 116-117 A.D.[1] In chapter 44 he relates the ghastly story of the Great Fire at Rome in A.D. 64, and the horrible cruelties afterwards perpetrated on the Christians. Tacitus was then a child of three; he grew up while remembrance of the catastrophe was still vivid; and he reports that it was widely believed that the Emperor himself had ordered the conflagration, and then endeavoured to throw the guilt upon the Christians. The founder of their name, he adds, viz. Christ, had been executed in the reign of Tiberius by the procurator Pontius Pilate. Like the letter of Pliny, this statement also has been impugned as a forgery. But as the challenge, at any rate in the hands of one of the latest critics, extends to the whole of the last six books of the *Annals* and the first five of the *Histories*, which are known only from one single manuscript discovered in the fifteenth century, it has found practically no support. It must, however, be noted that Tacitus does not mention the authority for his information. Had he derived it from the Christians themselves? There is nothing to show

[1] *Encycl. Bibl.* i. col. 753.

that he was acquainted with either their literature or their traditions at first hand. But neither is there any proof that he drew his knowledge from any official source. Whatever reports were in general circulation concerning the Christian origins and accessible to an inquiring historian, were probably due in the last resort to the statements of those who either professed, or had once professed, the 'destructive superstition.'

(2) Somewhat different is the case of the Jewish historian Josephus, who prided himself on his acquaintance with the affairs of his nation. Though not born till 37 or 38, he might perfectly naturally have recorded the crucifixion on the basis of contemporary Jewish testimony. The passage in the *Antiquities*, however, in which this event is related (xviii. 3, 3), is almost unanimously rejected as a Christian interpolation. It was already known to the historian Eusebius in the fourth century: on the other hand the great Alexandrian writer, Origen, was certainly unacquainted with it in the third.[1] It is possible that it was inserted in place of some less favourable reference; but without laying any stress on such a conjecture, an important indirect testimony is derived from the account of the death of James, who is described as 'the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ.' This is attributed to the activity of the high-priest Ananus (Ananias) during the interval between the departure of Festus and the arrival of the new procurator Albinus (*Antiquities*, xx. 9, 1), about the year 63. Unless we are to resort to the desperate expedient of striking out the identification of James as the brother of Jesus, there is here a clear testimony to the existence of Jesus in the

[1] Cp. *Against Celsus*, i. 47.

first century of our era. The brother of a man who died in 63 A.D., cannot have been himself executed in the reign of Alexander Jannæus between the years 104 and and 78 B.C. Josephus cannot be cited in attestation of the crucifixion of Jesus under Pontius Pilate; but he shows that Jesus was contemporary with a man who was put to death when he himself was about five and twenty.

(3) Yet one more witness meets us from the heart of Palestine, the Apostle Paul. True, the passage in *1 Tim.* vi. 15, which declares that Jesus 'witnessed the good confession' under Pontius Pilate may not be the language of the apostle himself, for the genuineness of the so-called 'Pastoral Epistles' has long been doubted. But the criticism which disputes their authenticity, only the more clearly establishes that of others. A small but vigorous school has, indeed, challenged the entire group, and declared the whole series bearing the name of Paul to be the products of the second century. This view is exposed to the immense difficulty of finding a period in which letters bearing so emphatic a stamp of individuality as those to the Galatians or Corinthians (for example), could have been composed. The special difficulties which they are intended to meet, the personal records which they contain, can hardly have been invented half-a-century later, when the conditions had already changed. If it be said that 'plainly Paul is not a contemporary, but a figure of the past,'[1] it can only be replied that this is assertion and not argument; when we read that 'everything points to later days,'[2] we ask that the critic shall distinguish. If, for instance, we find in *1 Tim.* vi. 20, a

[1] Van Manen, *Enc. Bibl.*, 'Paul,' vol. ii. col. 3627.

[2] *Ibid.* 3630.

warning against the *antitheses of the gnosis* (the 'oppositions of the knowledge') which is falsely so called, we may with great probability discern in the words a reference to a well-known work of Marcion, the teacher of a heretical *gnosis* in the second century, which was entitled the *Antitheses* (or 'oppositions,' viz., between the doctrine of God in the Old Testament, and that proclaimed by Christ). There is, then, some outside evidence for believing that the false teachers denounced in the Pastoral Epistles may have been Gnostics; and the impression that these documents contain elements of much later date than the apostle's own age, is strengthened by the observation that they apparently imply a more advanced church organisation, and that they cannot be brought into the framework of the apostle's career as it is known from other sources. None of these difficulties, however, attaches to such a letter as that to the Galatians (unless, indeed, the authority of *Acts* be preferred to it where they disagree). No external facts of indisputable authority are anywhere in conflict with it. If it be transferred to a period in the second generation after the reputed author has passed away, we enquire what circumstances could have evoked it, what crisis could have called forth its passionate pleadings, what opposition could have demanded such a personal justification. To this enquiry it is not enough to answer—'the historical background of the epistles is a later age.' It is part of the case against the Pastoral letters that this allegation can be made good in detail by reference to known historical developments. But this kind of evidence has not been produced (for example) in the case of the letter to the Galatians. On the other hand, its accept-

ance as a genuine composition of the apostle renders the light-hearted assertion that the Jesus of Paul lived 100 B.C. nothing short of ridiculous. It is quite true that the letter is not dated.[1] Nor does the writer attach to Jesus the descriptive designation 'of Nazareth.' But he knows that he was crucified, that James (whom he had seen) was his brother, and that Peter, James, and John (with whom he was personally acquainted) were 'pillars' of the Jerusalem church. If the authenticity of *Galatians* be admitted, the historical character of Jesus is beyond dispute.[2]

§ 3. Traditions in the Talmud.

One further item of evidence requires brief considera-

[1] There is not at present any definite agreement on the subject. Opinions range from 46 A.D. (McGiffert) to 57 or 58 (Lightfoot and Salmon).

[2] Mr. Robertson writes, *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 396, 'If the Jesus of Paul were really a personage put to death under Pontius Pilate, the Epistles would give us the strongest ground for accepting an actual crucifixion. We have seen that certain important passages were interpolated; but the references to a crucified Jesus are constant, and offer no sign of interpolation. But if Paul's Jesus, who has taught nothing, and done nothing but die, be really the Jesus of a hundred years before, it becomes readily intelligible that, even if he had been only hanged after stoning, he should by that time have come to figure mythically as crucified.' Mr. Robertson forgets that he has to account also for Peter, James, and John, at Jerusalem, together with James, the Lord's brother; for the twelve (*1 Cor.* xv. 5),—though they of course (in the author's view) are mythical; and for the last supper (*1 Cor.* xi. 23-25)—though this is excised as a late insertion from *Luke* xxii. 19-20 (Mr. Robertson should look to his Greek text). Mr. Mead has a much clearer insight into the significance of the Pauline letters, and at once perceives that they and the date 100 B.C. cannot possibly stand together.

tion. No successor of Josephus endeavoured to present the cause of his people to the educated world of Greece and Rome. But Judaism in due time produced its own literature. After the Temple had fallen and the sacrifices were suspended, the interest of Israel was concentrated on its sacred Law. The exposition of this law, the recital of decisions in settlement of disputed points, the interpretation of difficulties and the collection of cases illustrating them, occupied the time and thought of the Rabbis. About the middle of the second century, after the ill-fated rising of the Messianic pretender, Bar Coch^{e}ba, a movement began for organising this legal lore. Successive treatises were compiled out of oral tradition, and were formed into a sort of commentary upon the older law, guided rather by subjects than by the actual arrangement of the sacred text. These treatises constitute a great collection known as the *Mishnah*. By and by further material was accumulated and embodied in the form of a sort of commentary (*Gemara*) on the Mishnah, following the order of its divisions, and expanding and supplementing its instruction. To this complex whole, which acquired one form in Jerusalem and another in Babylonia, the name *Talmud* or 'Teaching' was given. The vast work became a repository of traditions of doctrine and practice, as illustrated in the sayings of a long succession of Rabbis famous for their learning. Roughly speaking, the period of the Mishnah lasted till about 220 A.D., when that portion of the collection was practically closed. The compilation of Gemaras is believed to have continued in Palestine till about 300 A.D., and in Babylon for yet another century (till 400 A.D.). It will, however, be

readily understood that the Gemara might embody materials really belonging to the age of the Mishnah, though not formally included in that collection. On the other hand, where the Babylonian Gemara contains statements and references unknown in Jerusalem, the presumption is less favourable to their antiquity or Palestinian origin.

(1) In this immense encyclopædia of unsorted materials occur several references to Christianity, to the Christians, and to their founder Jesus. The English reader will find them carefully arranged, translated, and discussed by Mr. R. Travers Herford in his treatise on *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*.[1] With his help the general result (for chronological purposes) may be presented as follows. The Rabbinical literature contains several allusions to a person or persons variously named Ben Stada, Ben Pandira, Jesus,[2] and Jesus the Nozĕri (Nazarene).[3] It is expressly stated that Ben Stada and Ben Pandira are the same. Jesus is also designated Ben Pandira; and as the same Jacob of Ch^{e}phar Sichnin is mentioned as a disciple of Jesus the Nazarene and Jesus Ben Pandira, it is plain that they also are identical. The mother of this Jesus is named Miriam (i.e. Mary). He has disciples of whom five

[1] London, 1903. An earlier collection of passages relating to Jesus only was made by Dalman; and these, together with an able essay by Laible, on 'Jesus Christ in the Talmud' have been translated by the Rev. A. W. Streane, under the title *Jesus Christ in the Talmud, Midrash, Zohar, and the Liturgy of the Synagogue*, Cambridge, 1893. The collection, however, as Mr. Herford points out, is incomplete.

[2] I adopt the English form of spelling as best known.

[3] On this epithet see Herford, p. 52 ***note*** 2.

are specified, though only one, Matthai, can be even remotely identified with any of the Twelve,[1] and these disciples perform, or seek to perform, cures in their teacher's name. He is even said to be near to the kingdom. Finally, however, he is charged with having deceived Israel by the practice of magic; he has learned spells in Egypt, and led Israel astray; and he is tried, stoned, and hanged on the eve of Passover.[2] Here are a number of obvious points of contact with the Christian story. But the scene of the whole closing transactions is shifted from Jerusalem to Lud (the modern Lydda), and the date is transferred to the second century of our era. Lydda rose into eminence after the fall of the Holy City in 70 A.D., as the home of distinguished scholars, especially Eliezer ben Hyrkanus, the teacher of the famous Rabbi Akiba, who perished by a martyr's death in the year 135 A.D. The era of Jesus is further identified with this period by the statement that the husband of his mother, who is called Pappos, was a contemporary of Akiba. The names Jesus, Ben Stada, and Ben Pandira, are not contained in the Mishnah, but are found, with the exception of Nazarene, in the Tosephta, which is contemporary with the Mishnah.[3] The main elements of the story of the trial and execution also belong to the earlier body of traditions. So far it

[1] Cp. Herford, pp. 90-95.

[2] For an interesting discussion of some peculiar details of the trial, see Laible's essay, Streane, pp. 79-89, and Herford pp. 78-83. For possible allusions to the crucifixion, though without any name, cp. Herford, 86-90.

It is one of the significant merits of Mr. Herford's work that he has carefully analysed the probable sources of the various statements, p. 350 ff.

would seem that if we are to abandon the Gospel narrative, and rely on the evidence of the Talmud, the proper question would be 'Did Jesus live 100 A.D.?' But Mr. Mead himself places the earliest evangelic document shortly after 70 A.D.; and this group of statements which enter the older Rabbinical literature between 150 and 220 A.D., finds no champions.

(2) It may be added, however, that a story in the Babylonian Talmud appears to refer in veiled language to some Christian testimony. Rabbi Hanina, who lived in Sepphoris at the beginning of the third century, and died in 232 A.D., answers a heretic, who had asked a question about the age of Balaam, by fixing it at thirty-three or thirty-four years.[1] The heretic replies, 'Thou hast answered me well. I have seen the chronicle of Balaam, and therein is written "Balaam, the lame, was thirty-three years old when Phinehas the robber killed him."'[2] Balaam and Jesus are occasionally classed together in the Talmud, so that the first almost becomes a type of the second. It is possible, therefore, that a 'chronicle of Balaam' was a gospel;[3] and that 'Phinehas

[1] The method by which this is determined is a characteristic specimen of Rabbinical ingenuity. The book of Numbers contained no statement on the subject, so the Rabbi replies 'There is nothing written about it.' Scripture is silent when invoked directly; but indirectly it supplies an answer. For the Rabbi proceeds to quote Ps. lv. 23, 'Men of blood and deceit shall not live out half their days.' The whole number was threescore years and ten; he infers, therefore, that 'from what is written, he must have been thirty-three or thirty-four years old.'

[2] Herford, p. 72.

[3] So Herford, p. 72. Laible (Streane, p. 60) suggests the New Testament.

the robber,' who cannot have been Phinehas the grandson of Aaron,[1] is a symbol of Pontius Pilate. If these identifications be allowed, the Talmud is not without allusion to the received date for the death of Jesus.

(3) Chronology, it is plain, is not the strong point of the Talmud. One further statement remains to be considered. The Babylonian Talmud contains the following story, thus translated by Mr. Herford :—[2]

Our Rabbis teach, Ever let the left hand repel, and the right hand invite, not like Elisha who repulsed Gehazi with both hands, and not like Rabbi Joshua ben Perachiah, who repulsed Jesus (the Nazarene) with both hands. [The story of Gehazi is omitted, and the passage continues] What of R. Joshua ben Perachiah? When Jannai the King killed our Rabbis, R. Joshua ben Perachiah (and Jesus) fled to Alexandria of Egypt. When there was peace, Simeon ben Shetach sent to him, 'From me (Jerusalem) the city of holiness, to thee Alexandria of Egypt (my sister). My husband stays in thy midst, and I sit forsaken.' He came, and found himself at a certain inn; they showed him great honour. He said, 'How beautiful is this Acsania.'[3] (Jesus) said to him, 'Rabbi, she

[1] 'Robber,' *listaah*, is the Greek *lêstês*, *Matt.* xxvi. 55, and could not have been applied to the distinguished commander of the armies of Israel against the Midianites. But it might contain a reminiscence of the national hatred of an unpopular Roman governor. See Laible and Herford, who both go back to the Rabbinical scholar Perles.

[2] *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, p. 50. The ordinary spelling is adopted for the names. The reader may be glad to distinguish the meanings of the round and square brackets according to Mr. Herford's intention. Round brackets denote words as to which there is a question of various reading in MSS. or printed texts, as explained in the notes of Rabbinowicz. Square brackets enclose words supplied for purposes of interpretation.

[3] The word denotes both inn and inn-keeper. R. Joshua uses it in the first sense; the answering remark implies the second meaning, 'hostess.'

has narrow eyes.' He said, 'Wretch, dost thou employ thyself thus?' He sent out four hundred trumpets and excommunicated him. He [i.e. Jesus] came before him many times and said to him, 'Receive me.' But he would not notice him. One day he [i.e. Joshua] was reciting the Shema,[1] he [i.e. Jesus] came before him. He was minded to receive him, and made a sign to him. He went and hung up a tile and worshipped it. He [R. Joshua] said to him 'Return.' He replied, 'Thus I have received from thee, that everyone who sins and causes the multitude to sin, they give him not the chance to repent.' And a teacher has said 'Jesus the Nazarene practised magic, and led astray, and deceived Israel.'

This passage recurs in another treatise of the Babylonian Talmud: and the incident of the flight to Alexandria and the letter of Simeon is related, in the Jerusalem Talmud, of another Rabbi, Judah ben Tabbai, without any reference at all to Jesus. The tradition which introduces him into the story was incorporated into the Talmudic collection in Babylonia, and was apparently unknown in Judea. The other persons are all familiar in history. King Alexander Jannæus reigned from 104 to 78 B.C., a full century, that is, before the received date of Jesus. Simeon ben Shetach was his brother-in-law: and both Simeon and Joshua were leading Pharisees. After the capture of the stronghold Bethomê, about 87 B.C., a shocking massacre took place, when eight hundred Pharisees were crucified. Many fled into Syria and Egypt: among those who found refuge at Alexandria was R. Joshua. How the name of Jesus got into the story as the disciple who was repelled, is no doubt beyond reach of explanation. The representation of him as a magician has been thought inconsistent with

[1] The text in Deut. vi., 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God, the Lord is one,' is adopted as the confession of Jewish faith.—J.E.C.

his relation to R. Joshua; but his study of sorcery might have been conceived as the result of his excommunication. Laible and Herford both find the connecting link in the fact of a flight into Egypt to escape the anger of a king (cp. *Matt.* ii. 13 ff.), and note other points of distant resemblance, such as the opposition of Jesus to the authority of the Rabbis (though he is here represented as making repeated attempts at reconciliation), or his association with women who were 'sinners.' The suggestions are not decisive; and it seems sufficient to lay stress on the fact that the story has undergone a development from the Jerusalem nucleus, where the name of the disciple is not mentioned.[1] In combining with it the name of Jesus, as a person of whom evil things were told, the Babylonian Talmudists failed to notice that they were shattering the earlier chronolgy which connected him with the age of Akiba. To erect this passage into an authority before which the Gospels must vanish, seems to betray a total incapacity for historical enquiry. The reason is unfortunately apparent in Mr. Robertson's own language: he cannot distinguish between Jesus the 'teacher' or the 'prophet,' and Jesus the virgin-born, and Son of God:—

> The evidence is obscure; and the personality of the hanged Jesus, who is said to have been a sorcerer and a false teacher, becomes elusive and quasi-mythical even in the Talmud; *but even such evidence gives better ground for a historical assumption than the supernaturalist narrative of the gospels.*[2]

By such reasoning a vast number of characters would disappear from the scenes of history.[3]

[1] Herford, p. 52.

[2] *Pagan Christs*, p. 186. The italics are mine.—J.E.C.

[3] The elaborate enquiry in Mr. Mead's volume, *Did Jesus live*

§ 4. The Historical Jesus.

What, then, is the issue of the modern study of the Gospels conducted on the principles briefly sketched in the foregoing chapters? Much must remain uncertain,

100 *B.C.*? is conducted with much more learning and caution (cp. his remarks on the story just quoted, p. 149). He has analysed with great minuteness a series of data in the late Jewish work known as the *Toldoth* (history) of Jesus, which exists in various forms, and in his judgment embodies early materials. Traces of these data he finds in the writing of Tertullian, about 200 A.D. (he does injustice to his own general accuracy by three times calling him a bishop), and later on in a very curious passage from Epiphanius, who was Bishop of Salamis in the fourth century, a man who blended a pious zeal for Christianity as he understood it, with abounding credulity and confusion of thought. In an extraordinary argument on the union of the kingly and high-priestly dignities, *Hær.* xxix. 3, Epiphanius plumply asserts that Jesus 'was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Alexander, who was of high priestly and royal race.' (Alexander is Alexander Jannæus, 104-78 B.C.) Mr. Mead supposes (p. 402) that Epiphanius derived this from Jewish sources. The statement is subsequently repeated, and in another connection Epiphanius refers to the 'tradition of the Jews.' He is acquainted with some form of the Pandira story, since he inserts Panther into the genealogy of Jesus as the father of Joseph. Joseph, moreover, is said to have been very old, and the date of Panther is thus carried back to 100 B.C. The attitude of our author appears at present to be one of suspense. He admits (p. 421) that 'if there is any element in the whole [gospel] narrative which bears on its face the stamp of genuineness, it is precisely the Pilate date. This, in my opinion, takes precedence far and away over all other date indications.' The matter is complicated by a reference to clairvoyance (even as to the readings of unknown but presumably Greek Manuscripts) pp. 19, 424, which introduces considerations not within the range of the present historical enquiry.

but the materials appear sufficient for a broad historical judgment.[1]

(1) In the first place the enquirer is confronted with solid evidence, in the second century, of the existence of a wide-spread organisation known as the Church. As he studies its literature, he is gradually led further and further back towards its origins, and, in the documents which show the marks of greatest antiquity, he finds most clearly the signs of a new movement, of singular freshness and power. A comparison of the letters of the Apostle Paul with one of the later books of Hebrew 'wisdom'—such as the sayings of the son of Sirach (*Ecclesiasticus*, about 180 B.C.), or the words of the Preacher (*Ecclesiastes*, which may possibly belong to a date still nearer the beginnings of Christianity),—reveals at once the entry of a powerful moral and religious impulse. Belief, aspiration, are quickened with a vigour to which the previous ages present no parallel. Behind Paul, in the order of historical succession, stands Jesus. Here is the source of what in New Testament language—itself founded on the time-honoured vocabulary of Israel's faith—bears the emphatic name of 'life.' The fountain-head of this stream, destined to gather volume through all subsequent generations, and to receive innumerable tributaries upon its course, lies in Jesus of Nazareth. The narratives which describe his career contain much that the historian must reject as belonging to the realm of imagination rather than of fact. But these elements are themselves of great value even to the historian. Why did they not gather around John the Baptist, or again around any of

[1] In the following sketch only the barest outline is attempted. The fuller justification of its positions must be deferred.

the heroic martyrs of Judaism, such as Rabbi Akiba? They point to the operation of what may be called a spiritual force, first evoked by the personality of the prophet of Nazareth. The religion of Osiris dies away upon its native soil, and its literature is only recovered by the laborious explorations of scholars, nineteen centuries after its priests had made their way to Rome. In the great capital where so many elements were mingled, the worshippers of Mithra, about the year 250 A.D., numbered on a moderate estimate at least thirty thousand. They counted one hundred and fifty-five clergy; they supported more than fifteen hundred poor.[1] The devotees of the Sun-god, the radiant 'Friend,' planted their sacred monuments all through Europe,—as far in our own island as the Roman wall north of the Tyne. But they had no gospels to preserve the memory of an actual career; they might relate his birth in a cave; they might call him mediator or saviour; they might tell of judgment and resurrection; but they had no record of a person. To such a person the early Christian literature bears emphatic witness. It may be that the greatness of Jesus is a resultant rather to be felt on the scale of history, than to be analysed into a sum of specific qualities. He does not inaugurate a new era of philosophical speculation like Plato or Kant. We cannot follow him through a long career of warfare with worldliness like Francis of Assisi, or with ecclesiastical corruption and tyranny like Luther. He does not clothe problems of life in imperishable artistic form, like Dante or Shakspere. He announces no great scientific general-

[1] Grill, *Die Persische-Mysterien religion im Römischen Reich und das Christenthum*, 1903, p. 46.

isation for the enlightenment of human thought, like Newton or Darwin. His genius is not to be distributed into compartments, which can bear such labels as intellectual force, moral energy, spiritual vision. What meets us in the Gospels, and in the early literature of the Church, is not so much novelty of teaching, in the sense of the announcement of truths unknown before, but newness of being, originality of character, a fresh outlook upon the world, an unexpected demand for action, a loftier hope for man, a closer walk with God.

(2) The youth of Jesus was passed in troubled times. Rome laid its grasp tighter and tighter on his native land. Disturbances after the death of Herod marked his childhood. Judas the Galilean (*Acts* v. 37), from Gamala in Gaulonitis, led a revolt which was suppressed with merciless cruelty. Sepphoris was burnt—the glare of the flames might have been seen from the hills above Nazareth —and its inhabitants were sold as slaves. Judas was connected with the obscure party of the Zealots, or Cananæans, who must have had a share of the violent and revolutionary spirit, for on their extreme wing they were allied with the still more obscure 'Assassins' (the Sicarii, *Acts* xxi. 38), and they lasted on as patriotic resolutes till the final catastrophe of A.D. 70.[1] It was a seething, agitated, expectant age. Tyranny oppressed the people; the aspiration after liberty was ruthlessly crushed. Suddenly, from the wilderness of Judæa, by the bank of the Jordan, probably in the year 29 A.D., is heard the poignant cry 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' The Baptist announces the immediate advent of the sovereignty

[1] The Revised Version has made it plain that one of the Twelve chosen by Jesus belonged to this party, *Luke* vi. 15, cp. *Matt.* x. 4.

or rule of God. In the true succession of the ancient prophets, he attacks the claims of Israel to divine favour, and threatens doom—not on the Gentiles, but on the chosen people. Vainly would Pharisee or Sadducee plead the merits of their father Abraham; out of the stones in the river at his feet, God could raise up better children of Abraham than they. Already was the axe laid at the root of the trees; over the disputes of sects and the sins and sores of social life, brooded the awful vision of 'the coming wrath.' In various emblems had Israel's seers depicted the advent of the Mighty One, to judge, to punish, and to renew; in penal and purifying flame they had seen the symbol of trial and destruction; in the gift of the spirit, the force of revival and new growth. Such baptism with Holy Spirit and with fire is even now at hand. The great catastrophe of judgment is approaching. Just as the Son of Sirach had declared, 'He is mighty in power and will take knowledge of every work of man;'[1] or Enoch had announced 'The Holy Lord will come forth with wrath and chastisement to execute judgment upon earth;'[2] or the author of the *Assumption of Moses*[3] had proclaimed 'The Heavenly One will arise from his royal throne, he will go forth from his holy habitation,' so does John behold a mysterious figure, lord of earth's husbandry, applying his mighty winnowing fan to the harvest of human things, gathering his wheat into the garner, and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

(3) Among the crowd who hang upon John's words is

[1] *Ecclesiasticus* xv. 18.

[2] *Enoch* xci. 7.

[3] Between 7 and 29 A.D. (Charles).

a young man from Nazareth, about thirty years old.[1] Jesus is the son of a carpenter named Joseph and his wife Mary. The eldest of a large family, he has four brothers and several sisters. One of these brothers, James, who afterwards joined the movement which survived his death, was a rigid Jew of the strictest type, and it has been supposed, accordingly, that the family had been trained in the practice of an austere piety. Of such legalism there is no trace in the action of Jesus. He has received the ordinary education of a village school. He is familiar with synagogue usage; at the sabbath worship he can take his place at the reader's desk; he has been trained in the teachings of the Law; and words of prophet and psalmist come readily to his lips. He has lived long enough to see a vast panorama of life spread out before him. He loves nature; he knows the times to sow and reap; he has marked the birds swoop down upon the grain flung out on the pathway through the field; he has seen the red lilies blossom on the hill-side; he has noted the shepherd bringing home the strayed sheep upon his shoulders; the sunset and the dawn have whispered their secrets to him, for it is his habit to spend long nights upon the mountains in silence and prayer. Not less dear to him is the home. He is not married, but he understands a father's love for his children; he has watched the house-wife kneading the dough or sweeping the house to find a lost coin, while the boys are at play in the market square outside.

[1] This is the statement of *Luke* iii. 23. Luke's efforts at definite chronology cannot be pronounced successful (*ante*, p. 100), but there is nothing improbable in this age, though the authority for it is unknown.

He comprehends the restlessness which drives a younger son away from routine and control into distant lands; and he penetrates to the soul of goodness in things evil, and discerns how the old home-ties survive the exhaustion of passion and the weariness of satiety. Poverty and riches, their trials and their opportunities, lie open to him; the caravans, passing and re-passing on the great road, the endless procession of nationalities going to and fro between east and west, between north and south, have brought him insights into trade and travel, and opened visions of wider fellowship to come. He has seen cruelty and lust in courts, and hypocrisy among the professors of religion; great truths have been perverted to ignoble issues; and as the call of John rings through the land, he, too, leaves his work, obeys the prophet's summons, and goes down into the Jordan to receive at his hand the 'baptism of repentance for remission of sins.'[1] In after days the Church looked on this moment as the time of a new birth.[2] By the unction of the Spirit he was then declared to be Messiah, and was thus adopted as God's Son. But the records of his Galilean ministry seem to show that at first he took up the work of John, though in a different way: and it was only at a subsequent stage that the question of the Messianic character forced itself upon him. Nevertheless, the contact with John, the stimulus of his impassioned preaching, the sense of movement, expectation, fear, hope, in the crowds around him, the intense force of personal appeal by which the needs of the whole age

[1] On the later protest against the implications of this event, *Matt.* iii. 14-15, see *ante*, chap. iii. § 2, p. 118-9.

[2] *Ante*, chap. iii. § 2, p. 116-7.

seemed to mingle in the prophet's words and call for help—must have made the act of self-surrender and dedication a momentous crisis, as Jesus went down into the stream. All sorts of thoughts, desires, emotions, wrestled in his mind. How should he shape the future thus opening to him? How give effect to the purposes that surged up from deeps of consciousness hitherto unplumbed? He must go apart; alone with God he must take the great decision. Meditation and prayer must be his guides to action; and resolve was not possible without trial. Once more the pictures of the Church, Messiah hungry yet living on the words of God, Messiah refusing to demonstrate his successful trust in heavenly aid, Messiah declining the empire of the world, portray these trials in the terms of later imagination.[1] When he returns from the wilderness, he learns that the prophet is in prison; the crowds have melted away; who is bold enough to continue the work? *His* hour is come. He will go back to Galilee, and announce to his own people in the midst of their daily toil that the kingdom of God is drawing near.

(4) The career of Jesus as a public teacher opens, according to the earliest testimony, in Galilee. Whether he first went back to Nazareth is uncertain; Matthew's phrase, iv. 13, 'leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum,' may be variously interpreted; while Luke's programme-sermon in the Nazareth synagogue implies previous activity in the busy lake-town, iv. 23.[2] At any rate Capernaum becomes the immediate centre of his work. He announces his message in the same terms as

[1] *Ante*, chap. iii. § 8, p. 120.

[2] Cp. *ante*, chap. vi. § 5, 3, p. 239.

John, a decisive proof of his early dependence on the Baptist. But his spirit is throughout social, not ascetic; a decisive proof, also, of his independence. He speaks in the synagogue, where he has joined in the public worship of his people; he enters the home and stands by the sick bed; he sits in a boat moored beside the beach, and addresses the crowds that throng the shore; when they follow him on to the hills, he is equally ready to speak there; one thing only does he jealously guard, the privacy of his nights for prayer, where he may be alone with the silent spaces and with God. His teaching is called 'new,' not because he employs new words, or expounds new knowledge, or proclaims new doctrine; but rather because it implies a new way of realising old truths, so that they lead to fresh issues; he does not reckon up traditional opinions, and found himself on the maxims of the Rabbis; he speaks with authority, and confidently appeals to his hearers to justify him, 'Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?' This note of authority is felt in his demeanour, as well as heard in his speech. It gives to his summons 'Come ye after me' a mysterious power of attraction and command. It rings with compelling force in one after another of his great utterances, whether for doing or being, 'go and do likewise,' 'be ye perfect.' It cannot be ranged among the recognised classes of the day; it defies analysis, for it springs out of a character of a novel type. And it has a strange and calming influence on the nervous and distraught, of whom there were only too many among the agitations of the time, so that the unhappy sufferers were calmed by his word, and soothed by his presence. Everywhere his conduct has a

notable boldness and originality. Even if every saying in the Sermon on the Mount could be found in the language of prophet or psalmist, of rabbi or scribe, we should still ask what teacher had shown the same passionate sympathy with the suffering, the poor, the sinful; who, before him, had sought them out and shared their meals, and encountered for their sake the malignant charge of being a glutton and a drunkard; what writer of apocalypses, portraying the great banquet of the kingdom, had deliberately announced 'I am not come to invite the righteous, but sinners'? Speedy collisions with recognised authorities awaited this daring innovator. The Scribes and the Pharisees, also, had among their adherents disciples who cherished the great hope. Out of their circles came books like the *Psalms of Solomon* and the *Assumption of Moses*. Their ideas of the resurrection and the judgment, the world to come, and the life in the next age, show many points of contact with those of Jesus himself. They undoubtedly represented the 'forward party' in contemporary religion. Some of them joined the movement afterwards; but during his brief career they remained first sullenly, then actively, hostile, and the fierceness of his invectives shows the depth of his disappointment with them. One single word indicates the vehemence of his anger—'Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, *actors*!'; their sanctimonious piety was one long-drawn pretence. Against their legal casuistry he appeals again and again to ultimate principles; in the face of the restraints of the Law he asserts the supremacy of human need and human rights. When he says to the paralytic, 'Son, thy sins be forgiven,' and they object that he thus infringes the prerogative of God, his answer is

prompt, 'The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins.' Who is this 'son of man'? Let the Psalmist answer.

> What is man that thou art mindful of him,
> And the son of man that thou visitest him!

The 'Son of Man,' the equivalent of the vernacular *Barnasha*, is (we are assured) the current term for 'man.'[1] It is no personal right, therefore, that Jesus asserts; it is the universal privilege of man as God's child. The baptism of John which was expressly designed for the forgiveness of sins, had more or less implied it; yet the prophet incurred no charge of transgressing his legitimate range. Jesus is vindicating, therefore, in his own person, a power that belongs to humanity at large; and as the cripple walks away to his poor home, Matthew describes the crowd (ix. 8) as gloryifying God who had given such 'authority' to men. The same interpretation explains another famous saying. The disciples on their way through the cornfields, one sabbath day, pluck some ears, rub out the grain, and eat it. The preparation of the food is a 'work,' which violates in Pharasaic eyes the day of rest. Similarly did David, and the high priest Abiathar, break the letter of the law, retorts Jesus, and were blameless. But the real argument comes after. Employing the rhythmic speech in which Hebrew wisdom was wont to condense its maxims of life, he adds (*Mark* ii. 27),

> The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath;[2]
> So that the son of man is lord even of the Sabbath.

[1] Cp. *ante*, chap. ii. § 2, *2c*, p. 73.

[1] So Hillel is reported to have said: 'The Sabbath is made for you, not you for the Sabbath.'

The evangelist, probably, assigned to the term the later Messianic meaning which it bore in the church. Jesus employed it, not to enforce an official claim, but to place all institutions beneath the human spirit.

(5) In one of his parables Jesus compares himself to a sower flinging out the seed, and his seed is 'the word.' He is no trained theologian of the schools; no philosopher pursuing a search for truth; no historian delving into the origins of his national literature; no student of science with a new theory of the universe. He is the inheritor of the prophetic spirit. He appeals less to the reason than to the will; he does not attempt to demonstrate the existence of God, he preaches a way of salvation to be known only by living. The short name for this way is 'the kingdom of God.'[1] In one sense the great change which will establish the rule of God, is already at hand, 'the kingdom of God has come near.' In another sense, it is the object of the disciples' quest, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.' The doctrine of the kingdom is the chief theme of the teaching of Jesus. It has important aspects both general and personal. When he declared its approach, what did he think that it meant, and what did he expect to happen? And as he looked out into the future, how did his own position shape itself to his thought; or, as he passed from place to place in Galilee, what did his hearers suppose him to be? The answers to these questions are not easy. They are still eagerly debated by those who are seeking to know Jesus; it must suffice here to indicate the nature of the problem.

(*a*) That there was an important body of doctrine

[1] On the expectations gathered under this name, chap. ii. § 1.

concerning 'the things to come' already familiar to Jewish thought, is now recognised on all hands. The familiar petition 'thy kingdom come'—without mention of the kingdom (said the Rabbis) a prayer was not a prayer—implied that it was something which was to arrive, and it would involve mighty changes, both outward and inward. Outwardly, its establishment was associated with an immense transformation of the existing scene, even to a new heaven and a new earth. This would triumph over all political powers such as Rome; it would also triumph over all social disorder, and do away with the poverty and suffering of the oppressed. And its inauguration would be accompanied by vast events, convulsions of nature, the resurrection of the dead, and the judgment of the nations. This group of conceptions bears in modern study the general name of Eschatology, or the 'doctrine of the last things.' It implied the speedy approach of a great divine manifestation, when unseen forces should be revealed from on high, and, amid tremendous revolutions in earth and sky, the new order should be installed. Hebrew imagination had never felt any difficulty in picturing such a transformation. The world was in the hand of God to destroy, to change, to recreate. 'He spake, and it was done,' was the triumphant exclamation of the older piety. He would speak again, and the universe would again obey his word. Of the order of nature, as modern science conceives it, this view took no heed. Now Jesus employs, according to the Gospels, the language of this doctrine. At the outset of his teaching he declares that the kingdom is at hand; to prepare men for its coming is the task which he undertakes. The place

the day, are still indefinite, but the time-honoured emblems are all there. We hear of 'this age' and the 'age to come,' of the judgment and the resurrection, the kingdom and the fire prepared for 'æonian' life and 'æonian' punishment. And the question is, has the language of Jesus about the kingdom this 'eschatological' meaning in all cases? If he says 'blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God,' does he mean 'Happy are you, for your lot will be speedily reversed'? If so, it must be admitted that the expectation has not been fulfilled.

(*b*) There was, however, another aspect of this idea. The doctrine of the 'kingdom of God' was not without analogies in the religion of the ancient Persians, under whose suzerainty Israel had lived for two hundred years. Ahura Mazda, 'the Lord all-knowing,' great God of purity, of light and truth, also had a 'kingdom,' which would be finally established amid scenes of resurrection, judgment, the overthrow of the powers of evil, and the appearance of a new earth and heaven. But the sovereignty of Ahura was 'spiritually discerned' wherever brotherly love ministered to human need; the third line of the believer's daily prayer declared—'He gives the kingdom to Ahura who bestows succour on the poor.' To help the suffering was to recognise Ahura's rule. In other words the 'kingdom' had an immediate and present aspect. It was not only something to be visibly founded hereafter; it was a living relation of the worshipper to his Lord. In the same way, when the Rabbis taught Israel to pray 'thy kingdom come,' they did not only mean 'may the resurrection and the judgment soon happen.' They, too, could conceive of the 'kingdom'

as a symbol of living spiritual relations. Whoever recited the solemn confession 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God, the Lord is one,' was said 'to have taken upon himself the yoke of the kingdom'; he thereby professed himself a subject of the heavenly king; it became his duty to act at once as a member of the spiritual order; he belonged to the ranks of the obedient and faithful in all worlds; and to him, therefore, the prayer meant (as Jesus phrased it) 'Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.' When God's will was fulfilled in the midst of suffering or trial, in that heart the kingdom had come; it was established as a present fact.

(*c*) Does not the language of Jesus reflect this view also? As he moves among the people, conducting the great warfare with evil which Hebrew prophecy had always waged, two orders of result impress him; the possessed are healed, and the sinners sin no more. From the outset of his career, he exerts a potent influence over the victims of disease and madness, in whom the demons from the abyss, according to the common theory of the time, had found a lodging. Over against the kingdom of God lay the dark realm of Satan. The herald of the advent of the one is empowered to control the emissaries of the other. When he sends out the Twelve to carry his message of good news, he bids them 'preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand: heal the sick: cast out devils.' This process is described figuratively as 'binding the strong man,' *Matt.* xii. 28, *Luke* xi. 20. The argument is noteworthy. Jesus has been charged with casting out devils with diabolic help. The reply is two-fold; a principle is affirmed—it is absurd to suppose that Satan destroys himself; and a personal application

is enforced—if I am enabled to do this by Beelzebub, who is it that aids your disciples to do the same? The power was nothing peculiar to himself, they shared it too. But, continues Jesus, 'if I by the spirit of God cast out devils, then is the kingdom of God come upon you.' In such beneficent activity the sovereignty of God was already plain. The same result is indicated in the parables which portray the kingdom under the symbols of seed and growth.[1] In the various destinies of the grain which the sower scatters from his pouch, Jesus describes the issue of his first experience as a teacher of the kingdom, his disappointments and his successes; those that have heard the word and brought forth fruit, cheer him with the conviction that, like the tiny mustard seed, the kingdom which starts with small beginnings will one day become a mighty tree. Men sleep and rise, but the forces of the spirit, like those of earth and air, sunshine and rain, are silently at work, and the harvest is ready without noise or display. When the modern reader passes from *Mark* iv. to *Mark* xiii., from the early days of the ministry to its close, he cannot help asking himself 'Has Jesus changed?' Why is the voice on the Mount of Olives so different from that by the Galilean lake? Here is another of the great problems of the Gospel. But before attempting to indicate an answer, let us briefly consider the contents of the 'word.'

(6) The religious language of Jesus was naturally the language of his people and his age. He was brought up

[1] The student who finds nothing original in the Gospels should give heed to Fiebig's declaration, *Altjüdische Gleichnisse und die Gleichnisse Jesu*, 1904, p. 105, that in the whole extent of Jewish literature there are no parables of the kingdom of heaven.

in the midst of the ancient pieties; he breathed the spiritual atmosphere impregnated with the ideas of Law, Prophecy, and Psalm; and he realised to the full that sense of personal communion with God which had begotten the exalted utterances of Israel's faith,—

> Whom have I in heaven but thee?
> And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

(*a*) To the ordinary Jew this high fellowship became actual through his consciousness of belonging to the chosen people, and his share in the privileges of the Law. The seers and sages of old had again and again risen above this limitation. They had looked on nature as the vesture of the Eternal; they had seen the nations migrate as the organs of a providential purpose; they had affirmed the social institutions of government and law from land to land to be the earthly and secular manifestations of a wisdom from above.[1] Here was religion free from all limitations of race and locality. The call to worship summoned 'all flesh' to prayer. But in the schools of Palestine, surrounded by alien peoples and idolatrous worships, the exclusive claims of Israel had become more and more emphatic. These claims Jesus frankly set aside. When he declared 'man' lord of the sabbath, the authority of the Law fell into the background. 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour,' said the Law. But the interpreters recognised no neighbourship beyond Israel. There was no need to risk life for a drowning Samaritan; he was no 'neighbour.' Jesus, on the other hand, boldly makes a traveller of the hated race the hero of his parable of helpfulness, and holds

[1] For instance, *Psalms* civ., cxxxix., cxlv.; *Proverbs* viii.

up the Samaritan as the neighbour to be loved.[1] In other words, the intensity, the directness of the religious consciousness of Jesus led him implicitly to affirm that what was true for him as a son of God, was true for all. All men stand in the same relation to the Father; all are the objects of his bounty, and the children of his love.

(*b*) By such a teacher religion was naturally presented without priestly or sacramental mediation. The Law had its complicated transactions of purification and atonement. Even John had baptised. But Jesus did not impose this rite. When he called the children to him, and rebuked the kindly officiousness which would have shielded him from their mothers' importunity, what was his word? 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' Did he enquire if they were already 'regenerate and born anew of water and the Holy Ghost'? And if not, how does the English infant differ from the Jewish babe? Jesus, indeed, was never indifferent to sin. But he is never entangled in theological theories to the obscuring of spiritual relations. His language concerning forgiveness is singularly direct. It had its stern and severe side

[1] Mr. Robertson, however, finds that 'there is positively no reason to doubt that Jews unknown to fame, living in contact with other cultures, were capable of reaching the moderate ethical height of the parable of the Good Samaritan, which is partly precedented in Old Testament teaching. Such teachings, though the best in the Gospels, seem marvellous only in the dim light of the Christian tradition; there is nothing in them which could seem wonderful to a morally educated Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Chinaman, or Hindu, at the beginning of our era.' *Christianity and Mythology*, p. 463. The field of Greek literature is open: will Mr. Robertson take the Good Samaritan, and from Plato to Plotinus find his match?

to the unloving, the hard and self-satisfied, the wilfully blind. But his stories of the king and his servants, the aged father and the wandering son, tell us that the path of restoration is ever open: no way of approach is barred or inaccessible. Between the penitent prodigal and his father's embrace there was no altar needing an atoning sacrifice, no priest controlling the 'chartered channels' of grace. Only the father's love awaited with infinite patience the awakening of the new life, the fresh birth of compunction and endeavour. The veil, indeed, is dropped just where modern experience tends to find the problem become acute;—what was the place of the younger son in the home when the calf was eaten, and the best robe was doffed? The path of discipline and recovery is full of pain, if also of hope; it was the greatness of Jesus that he was willing to trust *all* to love.

(*c*) The morality of Jesus is thus inward rather than outward. This does not mean that he was indifferent to conduct. Action is one of his persistent demands: 'by their fruits ye shall know them.' Compared with the Pharisees, he again and again calls for other behaviour; but this is because he has first of all called for other dispositions. Behind the external conversation lie the secrets of the soul. His teaching does not emphasize specific acts so much as quality of being. Much of it is not even new; its originality consists in giving fresh values to the old. It is a morality not of law but of affection. According to one story it is a lawyer, according to another Jesus himself, who picks out the two vital commandments of love to God and to one's neighbour as the sum of religious duty. The choice implies that religion lies not so much in conformity to a code as in a new temper of

the heart. This spirit, as the apostle Paul immediately discerned, is the nurse of freedom. The word 'liberty' does not occur in the First Three Gospels. But the idea is everywhere. It is of no use to put new wine into old wine-skins, or patch a worn-out garment with fresh cloth. Ritual and ceremony have lost their savour; throughout there is a direct appeal away from consecrated custom or traditional usage to new hopes, new life. Accordingly principles take the place of rules; system gives way to conscience. It is not the deed of unchastity, but the lust from which it springs, that constitutes the real adultery. Uncleanness does not lie in the food that is received into the mouth, but in the thoughts, words, acts, that issue from the centre of our personality within. There is the seat of love and trust; there the place where the struggles with evil are fought, and the victories of faithfulness are won; there the gladness and confidence of those who walk unhesitatingly with God. Viewed in this light, the Gospel is not a detailed legislation, fit for all social circumstances, with an answer for every national, or even for every personal contingency. The short sharp words which Jesus addresses to particular individuals at special crises—'Sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and come, follow me'—are not maxims of universal significance and perpetual obligation. Jesus is not issuing commands which are to be valid for all time. 'You must hate your father and mother if you wish to be my disciple' is not intended to render family life for ever impossible. This is the peremptory demand in view of an impending crisis—'the kingdom is at hand,' you must break every tie if needful, to get ready for it. Just as we have to translate the language of Jesus into

our modern speech, and abstract from his thought of God and the world what is inconsistent with our modern science, so must we transpose the ethical demands of Jesus into the conditions of our own day; and withdraw the limitations of time and circumstance which bounded his view. Then we must try to see with his eyes, and look out on life anew with his spirit. To live on his plane we must be ready for great sacrifices. Between truth and honesty on the one part, and usefulness, success, or ease, on the other, Jesus admits of no compromises. Our domestic peace, our social standing, even our tenderest family reverence, may be the price of discipleship. Blessed is he who can pay it without reserve.

(*d*) The result of such an endeavour, speaking in the broadest terms, is to present life as a trust, to be used not for personal enjoyment merely but for the welfare of others. In carrying back the scope of moral judgment from the conduct without to the spirit within, Jesus does not throw action into the background. For the indulgence of fine sentiments as an æsthetic pleasure, he would have had nothing but contempt. He lays stress everywhere on the will which performs, as well as on the heart which feels. And he gives to this energy an unexpected range. The maxim ascribed to Hillel, 'What thou wouldest not done to thyself, do not to others,' is converted by Jesus into a call for positive deeds. It is not enough to abstain from injuring those who are better off than ourselves. Jesus calls on his disciples to give active help to those who are worse. 'I am among you,' is his word, 'as one that serveth.' The 'goats' who are put on the left of the Son of Man in the great judgment scene, do not stand there because they were Greeks or

Egyptians and not Jews; nor because they had neglected the proper sacrifices, and failed to visit the temples or say the appointed prayers; they are condemned as deficient in humanity, as lacking love, they have seen suffering and have not striven to relieve it. Why should they, until they have realised that the same bounty enfolds them all, the same sun shines on the evil and the good, the same rain falls on the just and the unjust? The gospel, then, is the vehicle of a mighty impulse for the renovation of human life. It demands of the disciple an unwearied service; it sends him forth to seek and to save the lost; rescue from degradation, recovery out of weakness, deliverance from debasing passions and infirmity of will, elevation above despondency and hopelessness, vision for blindness, light upon ignorance, and sympathy upon sorrow, these have been its perpetual watchwords. Jesus had no idea of the social order as we are slowly learning to understand it. Of the vastness of the world, the great procession of its nations, the immense developments of modern industrial enterprise, the instruments which science has put into our hands for calling the powers of nature to the aid of human skill, he knew nothing. Yet all that we call progress, in the attainment of knowledge, in the advance of social justice, in the slow effort—even now little more than a dream in the hearts of a few—to knit the nations together in the bond of peace, rightfully belongs to him. All this is part of the great hope of the 'kingdom of God.' It does not determine the forms of the social order towards which we are moving. That is the business of science, not prophecy; it must be achieved out of the laborious processes of experience; there is no short cut

to the re-organisation of life. What Jesus has done is to give force and vitality to a great ideal; to present that ideal so that it may itself expand and develop with the movement of the years; to kindle such joy in it that life is, as it were, new-made, when it is steadily discerned and loyally followed; to link it with the loftiest of our conceptions alike of the present and the future. Watchfulness and endeavour, trust and love, are his demands. For those who strive to see eye to eye with him, the key to the entire development of man lies in the words 'Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.' They are content to wait for God to complete the education which he has here begun.

(7) If such was the 'word' that Jesus sowed, what impression did men form of the Sower? It was inevitably mixed.

(*a*) In common talk he is addressed with the title Teacher (as it were *Rabbi*). The same title had been bestowed on his predecessor John, *Luke* iii. 12. Even in Jerusalem he is content with no higher, *Mark* xiv. 14. Yet as his fame grows, he is lifted above contemporary repute; it is surmised that he belongs to an older day, a more august company; he is Elijah, or Jeremiah, returned to earth, or one of the prophets; and when he enters Jerusalem, and the question flies from lip to lip, 'Who is it,' the answer is ready, 'the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee.' This was apparently his own view of his function; when he makes a fruitless visit to Nazareth, and can do no mighty work there because of his fellow-townsmen's want of faith, he sadly observes, 'A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.'[1] Now the

[1] Cp. *Luke* vii. 16, 39, xxiv. 19.

prophetic character was regarded as, in a special sense, a manifestation of what in Old Testament language was designated 'spirit.' In ancient days it was marked by excited utterance, and equally excited action. A certain vehemence alike of speech and of demeanour lifted the prophet above the level of the ordinary teacher. It was the same with the ministry of the 'prophets' in the early church. Their words were incoherent, irregular, unintelligible; they needed an interpreter to explain what was spoken 'with tongues.' Something of the same unconventional character must have appeared in the activity of Jesus. He does not employ the external symbols of an Isaiah or a Jeremiah; he does not even adopt the ascetic habit of his predecessor. But his personality is full of power; he rouses a startling enthusiasm; his words of denunciation burn like darts of fire; he kindles hopes of immense social transformations when injustice and hypocrisy shall be hurled into abysses of doom; he consorts with strange followers whom respectable working people like his brothers cannot endure; the good name of the family is being dragged in the dust! Long after did the traces of this feeling survive, when the author of the Fourth Gospel represented the antagonism of the Jews under the formula 'Thou hast a devil.'[1] Only the earliest tradition, however, preserves the remembrance that this view was in fact shared by his own kin. He has already gathered eager crowds around him. From place to place the excitement has spread. Wherever he appears, the publicans and sinners share his meals, the frenzied and distraught assemble round him; the whisper rises among his friends 'he is as mad as they'; until at

[1] *John* vii. 20, viii. 48-52, x. 20-21, the only references to the theory of possession in this gospel.

length mother and brothers can bear it no more; they arrange to secure his person, to put him under a kind of domestic arrest, in order to protect him from himself; and under the plea that he is 'out of his senses' or 'beside himself,' they 'go out to lay hold on him.'[1] From a higher point of view a similar impression is conveyed. All lofty gifts and energies were originally conceived as the endowments of the Spirit of the Lord. By these should the rule of the ideal king be distinguished, *Is.* xi. 2; by this should the 'servant of the Lord' be upheld when he went forth to the nations, *Is.* xlii. 1. In the programme-sermon with which Luke opens the teaching career of Jesus, in the synagogue at Nazareth, he claims that in Jesus the ancient promise is fulfilled, 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me.' That, as we have seen, is the significance of the baptismal hour; then did the early Church suppose that he received the unction of the spirit, and, as Messiah, became Son of God. But the statement of *Mark* i. 10 is noteworthy; for the reading which is now widely believed to have most authority, asserts that the Spirit descended *into* him. It occupied him with a sort of divine possession, and produced a tumultuous impulsive action—'immediately the spirit driveth him into the wilderness.' The constant recurrence of the same descriptive adverb throughout this Gospel, 'straightway,' reflects this aspect of impetuosity; and the story of his strange words and stranger ways is explained by the theory that he was the actual embodiment of a power from above. In Jesus, as in all great original

[1] *Mark* iii. 20, 21, 31. The intervening passage 22-30 appears to be a later addition, cp. *ante* chap. v., pp. 190, 203.

creative souls, there was a large element of the incalculable, the unexpected; the vigour of his spirit breaks out in ever fresh forms of thought and life.

(*b*) The Sower, we have seen, sowed 'the word'; as nature toiled for the waiting husbandman, so he relied on the silent forces of truth and love to work the mighty moral and spiritual change which the coming kingdom required. When he sent forth the Twelve, their task was not to proclaim *him*, but to spread the good news he had received from John, 'Preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Even when John despatches his messengers, Jesus sends back no definite reply to his anxious question. He is content to describe his method, and leave the Baptist to draw his own conclusions. But little by little the conflicts into which he is drawn with the representatives of traditional usage, compel him to consider his own position. His own vision widens, his grasp of principle is made firmer, in face of the hostility which confronts him. And the question begins to suggest itself how he shall define his attitude towards the great movement which he has already touched to such fine issues. The death of John brings these thoughts out of obscurity into more active consciousness. The first preacher of the kingdom has perished. Was the same fate to overtake the second? Over the question of ceremonial defilement he finally breaks with the Pharisees, *Mark* vii. 1-23. One single principle upsets the whole law. Not that which goes into a man defiles him, but the evil deed which comes out. Impending danger drives him to flight. He retreats into Phœnicia, and would have no man know it. By a long circuit he returns after some time to Bethsaida, viii. 22,

only to withdraw again to the groves around Cæsarea Philippi, where the springs of the Jordan burst from the cliffs of Mount Hermon. There he decides that the time has come for a great venture. During these wanderings he has been pondering on the future. What prospect was there for himself and his cause? He has learned what difficulties await it in the homely circles of Galilean life: and his thought has brooded on the bold plan of appealing to his people in their capital, at the centre of their worship, their law, and their hope. But in what character shall he go? What, in other words, was his real function? How could he explain himself to himself? Was he simply a Rabbi, without the technical training of the schools, who had some new and original views of the scope of the Kingdom and its transcendence over the Law? Was he only the continuator of the work of John, —a prophet of another type, indeed, yet like him only a 'voice,' without more definite relation to the coming age? Little by little there rises in his mind the noblest figure of ancient prophecy, that 'Servant' to whom was committed the task of proclaiming 'the acceptable year of the Lord.' Could it be that to this same task he was called? In this direction he had already pointed when he bade the messengers of the Baptist tell their Master what they themselves had seen, the blind received their sight, the lame walked, and the poor had good tidings preached to them.[1] At length the time is come for him to declare his true character to his followers, and prepare them for the final effort. Turning to the Twelve among the olive-groves and poplars, he enquires 'Who do

[1] *Matt.* xi. 4, 5, cp. *Is.* xlii. 7, xxxv. 5, 6, lxi. 1.

men say that I am?'[1] The answers vary: John the Baptist, they tell him, Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the old prophets risen again. 'But,' continues Jesus, 'whom do you say that I am?' And Peter replies without hesitation, 'Thou art the Messiah.' The word has been uttered, the title confessed, and the Teacher has not rejected it. Difficulties, indeed, does it involve. Popular hope was fixed upon the 'Son of David,' who should bring 'deliverance from the enemy,' *Luke* i. 71, 74, and restore Israel to power, *Acts* i. 6. But Jesus made no claim to royal ancestry. When the crowd follows him out of Jericho, the blind beggar Bartimæus might easily address him with a popular name, and pass unnoticed. But to the Pharisees Jesus appears deliberately to argue that the Messiah need not be of David's line.[2] The expectation which the function carried with it, was altogether alien from his own character; the experience of a few weeks was to show how bitter would be the disappointment if he failed. Yet by no other name could he describe himself. Till his plans are ripe, therefore, let those who know his secret guard it with care. He will go to Jerusalem, to triumph or to die.[3]

[1] So *Mark* viii. 27, *Luke* ix. 18. *Matthew's* form, xvi. 13, already involves the claim to the Messiahship.

[2] *Mark* xii. 35-37; *ante*, p. 68.

[3] I adhere to the view expressed in the first editions of this book, from the seventh chapter of which some sentences are incorporated in the foregoing section. In the *Seat of Authority in Religion*, Dr. Martineau sought to show that Jesus did not accept the title of Messiah. In Germany Wrede and others have recently taken the same view. The entry into Jerusalem, however, seems to me at once historical and decisive of his function: nor can I reject the explicit confession at the trial as an 'exceptional detail.' On the other hand Oscar Holtzmann, *Life of Jesus* (1904), p. 326, accepts

(8) The brief period which follows the great resolve at Cæsarea Philippi, lasts in all probability but a few weeks. According to the more trustworthy narrative of *Mark* x. 1, and *Matthew* xix. 1, Jesus travels to the capital by the eastern route, instead of the shorter journey through Samaria, into which *Luke* throws so much of his materials, ix. 51-xviii. 14. Beyond the Jordan there was the same eager interest in his teaching which had been already shown in Galilee. Crowds gather round him, and many follow him from Jericho. They climb the steep ascent to Bethany, where a colt is found on which Jesus rides over the slope of Olivet, and formally enters Jerusalem in Messianic dignity. By the daring act of driving the money-changers from the temple-precincts he at once challenges public attention, and concentrates upon himself the anger of the whole priestly party. But he does nothing further. Day after day he walks in the temple courts, ready to talk with friend or foe. The people wait and watch; the opposition gathers; what does he expect to happen? Is he conscious of the approaching fate? He has dared all in coming to Jerusalem; he has thrown out hints—a cup that he must drink, a baptism that he must be baptized with—of peril and failure. And yet the disciples' hope was high: would they not soon be with him in his glory (*Mark* x. 37)? Many and baffling are the problems of these last days. Had he a programme? What did he hope to accomplish? The answer depends in part upon the meaning which is attached to the mysterious language in which, from Cæsarea Philippi onward, he announces the coming of

the language of *Matt.* xvi. 18-19, which does not appear to me to be genuine.

the Son of Man. In his earlier preaching the doctrine of the last things is shrouded in reserve. Once only do we hear of the advent of the Son of Man, in a highly composite discourse addressed (in *Matt.* x. 23) to the Twelve when they are first sent out to preach. The passage to which this verse is attached, 17-22, appears in nearly the same words in *Mark* xiii. 9-13; and is certainly placed too soon by Matthew. It does not contain instructions for the mission of the apostles among the villages of Galilee, in the first flush of enthusiasm and success, but warnings of the difficulties which will beset the future preaching of the Gospel. The reference in *Matt.* x. 23, therefore, cannot supply any certain witness of the early anticipations of Jesus; it seems to belong to the sayings assigned by *Mark* to the last days. The first definite appearance of this hope in the teaching of Jesus occurs in the colloquy with the disciples, enforcing the austere demand that those who follow Messiah shall do so carrying their cross (*Matt.* xvi. 24; *Mark* viii. 34).

Mark viii. 38, ix. 1.	*Matt.* xvi. 27, 28.	*Luke* ix. 26, 27.
For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.	For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render to every man according to his doing.	For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when he cometh in his own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels.
And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There be some here of them that	Verily I say unto you, There be some of them that stand here,	But I tell you of a truth, There be some of them that stand

stand *by*, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God come with power.

which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

here, which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

When the young man who had great possessions sorrowfully departs, unable to accept the Teacher's summons 'follow me,' Peter remarks with satisfaction, 'That is what we have done; what shall we get?' And the recorded promise runs, *Matt.* xviii. 28,

Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

This is the great theme of discourse on the Mount of Olives; the speaker describes the beginning of the 'birth-pains,' the labour or travail which will mark the approaching end of the age (*Matt.* xxiv. 8). Wars, famines, earthquakes, the portents and catastrophes of ancient prophecy, will precede the 'great tribulation,' which will be followed by the sun eclipsed, the failing moon, the falling stars;

Mark xiii. 26, 30, 31.

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory . . .

Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth

Matt. xxiv. 30, 34, 35.

And they shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory . . .

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall

Luke xxi. 27, 32.

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory . . .

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass

shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.	pass away, but my words shall not pass away.	away, but my words shall not pass away.

And once again, in the final crisis on the fatal night, when he is asked 'Are you the Messiah?' and there is no time to qualify or explain, he boldly cries 'I am,' and adds :—

Mark xiv. 62.	*Matt.* xxvi. 64.	*Luke* xxii. 69.
And ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.	Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.	From henceforth shall the Son of man be seated at the right hand of the power of God.

According to the current identification of the term 'Son of man' with Jesus, these words[1] can only mean that the situation will shortly be reversed: *he* will be seated on the judge's throne, and his captors will receive their doom at his hands.[2] But this did not happen. Jesus did not come back. Was he, then, mistaken in holding out this promise? Let us ask, rather, whether the promise has been correctly understood.[3] It is admitted on all hands that the language is founded on the vision in *Daniel* vii. But it is remarkable that Jesus, whether in encouragement or threat, should never say 'You shall see *me* coming.' Why does he name an apocalyptic

[1] Observe that Luke's version softens them away.

[2] The testimony of the Apostle Paul suffices to indicate the expectation of the early church; cp. ***Romans*** ii. 16, ***1 Cor.*** vii. 8, ***1 Thess.*** iv. 16, ***2 Thess.*** i. 7, 8, &c.

[3] The substantial accuracy of the reports is here assumed. The limits of this sketch do not allow of critical defence. It must suffice to point out that the same announcement is practically repeated three times.

symbol, not himself? May not the reason be that it was just because the term had for him that vaguer meaning? The seer of Daniel avowedly uses the advent of 'one like unto a son of man,' as an emblem of a vast manifestation of the divine will. The forces of justice and love which would be established in the kingdom of the saints, *Dan.* vii. 27, are typified by a human figure of celestial origin, in contrast to the empires of heathen might which rose in a succession of brute forms upon the earth. His appearance thus represented the fulfilment of the prophetic ideal, the consummation of Israel's training to accomplish the purposes of God. It is part of the secret of apocalyptic hope to believe that the victory of good is close at hand. It is not concerned with ways and means; it rises into the realm of transcendent powers, and fastens its vision on the divine righteousness, confident that this must realise itself. In this spirit Jesus looked for the speedy entrance of the eternal agencies of truth and equity, mercy and peace, into the scene of Israel's life; when the world's selfishness and violence would pass away. Of their approach he had been the herald; face to face with death, he is assured that they are near; he may be cut off, like the Anointed Servant of an older age, from the land of the living; but the judgment, the resurrection, are nigh, when he will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. Undaunted, then, he confronts the anger of the council, the wrath of the high-priest; as though he said, 'You may kill me, but you cannot baffle God! Messiah may perish, but the Son of Man will come!'

(9) The prominence of this expectation in the language of Jesus during his latter days certainly seems to mark a

change in his view of the progress of 'the kingdom.' It ceases to be an internal principle of growth, it is presented as an immediate 'divine event.' How far this was due to the growing sense that the hostile forces were too strong, and could only be overcome by direct interposition from above, the scanty records do not enable us to determine. But it is clear from the letters of the apostle Paul that the eschatological anticipations of the early Church were passionately vivid; and for this ardour of hope there must have been an active root in the language of Jesus himself. The intensity of his trust in the triumph of God's will begot the profound conviction that its fulfilment could not be delayed: and the greater the obstacles and dangers which beset him, the more ardent was his reliance that the Father would himself achieve his own designs. This is the key to his attitude in the last days. In the prospect of the speedy close of the existing order, what mattered the tribute to Rome! Let Israel pay; it would not be for long. But this inaction wins him no support. A Messiah who does nothing, but only talks, can satisfy no popular demands. Night after night he retreats to Bethany. The scenes of homage and welcome are never repeated with his morning return. He divines the plots that thicken round him, but he will make no attempt to evade them by flight. The passover-supper is spread; his desire to celebrate the feast with his immediate followers is realised; and emotion plays swiftly round the two thoughts uppermost in his mind, his personal peril, and the vindication of God's cause: he will drink no more wine with them till he drinks it new in the kingdom of God, *Mark* xiv. 25. He even encourages the apostles, according to *Luke* xxii.

30, with a promise made (*Matt.* xix. 28) during their journey, that they shall sit on thrones in that kingdom, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.[1] The evidence is conflicting, and does not appear to justify the belief that Jesus expected rescue from heaven; on the other hand it is plain from the sequel that the apostles were entirely overwhelmed by the catastrophe of the crucifixion; and the repeated and detailed predictions of his death and resurrection must have taken their present shape under the influence of the Church. The further proof of this lies in the struggle in Gethsemane. No confident foresight of personal triumph breathes in the broken words amid the shadows of the olive trees. The prayer of self-surrender could not fall from the lips of one who was to make the cross a throne. It could have meaning only if the future was uncertain, and death loomed instead of victory.[2] Bitter it was at the last hour to pass, and leave the work unfinished. Yet prayer brings peace, and in the crisis of trial strength again returns. Before his accusers he stands with unshaken courage; is it only to fail upon the cross? Does the dying cry, 'My

[1] What the precise language of Jesus was it is impossible to determine. That Messiah's followers would have certain privileges in the kingdom was natural; and the language of *Exod.* xix. 6, was early applied to describe their dignity. They would have a share in royalty, and might be said to 'reign in life,' *Rom.* v. 17; cp. 12, *1 Cor.* iv. 8. The saints would thus actually take part in the judgment, and would even 'judge angels,' *1 Cor.* vi. 2, 3., cp. *Rev.* xx. 4, and v. 10.

[2] The Fourth Evangelist, accordingly, omits it as inconsistent with the appointed destiny of the Son; on the other hand, Messiah's majesty flings the troops sent to arrest him in the dust, *John* xviii. 6.

God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' mean that he felt himself abandoned in the last hour? Does his career close in an abyss of despair? To *Luke* and *John*, whose accounts of the whole Passion run on independent lines, this seemed impossible; and they portray Jesus as serenely trustful or already victorious.[1] The tradition in *Mark* and *Matthew*, however, seems too securely established to be doubted. But what does it mean? Is it an utterance of defeat and desolation? So it is natural at first to interpret it. Yet such an interpretation seems inconsistent with the whole character of Jesus, and especially with the inner history of the fatal night. The possibility of death had been in sight for weeks. He had come to Jerusalem ready to face the worst. As it approached, it proved indeed a trial more grievous than even he had foreseen. But in Gethsemane he had solemnly offered himself to God. Could he flinch when the offering was accepted? What pain and shame could undo his trust, or sever the fellowship of his spirit with the Father? It is more congruous, therefore, with his previous attitude to interpret the cry as a final declaration of faith.[2] The verse opens the passionate pleading of one of Israel's hymns; but the Psalm which begins with desolation closes with glowing hope, *Ps.* xxii. 24-28:—

> He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted.
> Neither hath he hid his face from him;
> But, when he cried unto him, he heard.
>
> * * *
>
> And all the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the LORD.

[1] Cp. the modification in the fragment of the *Gospel of Peter* 'my strength, my strength, why hast thou deserted me.'

[2] So many, from Schleiermacher onwards.

> And all the kindred of the nations shall worship before thee.
> For the kingdom is the LORD's;
> And he is the ruler over the nations.

With this last affirmation of the kingdom, Jesus died.

Such is the historical witness of the First Three Gospels. The real tragedy of the life of Jesus does not lie in his death,[1] but in the insufficiency of the Messiahship. He was obliged to use the forms of thought provided by his age, and they were inadequate to the greatness of his ideas. His principles far transcended the moulds which the time provided. The proofs of his greatness lie in history, for his conceptions have again and again prompted and guided vast movements of religious thought and life; and they are even now rising into fresh power. This influence is due to many causes. It was first powerfully promoted by the efforts to disengage the truths of Christianity from their primitive eschatological form. This was not effected so much by the apostle Paul, in whom the eschatological expectation is still very powerful, as by their frank combination with Hellenic ideas in the Fourth Gospel, and the re-statement of them in terms which could be harmonised with the permanent order of the world. When that attempt was first made, it was inevitable that the person of Jesus himself should be presented under new modes of thought. The return to the historical Jesus will involve much sifting of time-honoured beliefs, much readjustment of the perspectives of the future. Many elements, once thought vital to faith, will gradually

[1] The resurrection is not here discussed, as it belongs properly to the history of the Church.

fall away and disappear. The entire cycle of Messianic conceptions will pass out of the sphere of religion, and cease to prescribe the patterns of our hope. In a larger and more ancient universe than ever Jesus knew, we shall not expect him to reappear in our skies, roll back the deeps of our seas, and draw forth from the earth the reanimate forms of the uncounted dead. The doctrines belonging to the old order which have established themselves in the so-called Apostles' Creed, from the virgin-birth to the resurrection of the body, will one by one lose their vitality, and cease to control the faith of those who understand the processes which gave them shape. Ecclesiastical Christianity may be shaken; but the religion of Jesus will be untouched. Then, as of old, men will still learn of him to say 'Our Father.' Then, as of old, with a wider outlook and a fuller knowledge, may it be also with as deep a love and trust, they will repeat his prayer,

> 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
> As in heaven, so on earth.'

THE END.

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